

THE COMMON WEAL

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THE COMMON WEAL

*SIX LECTURES
ON POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY*

BY

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ARCHDEACON OF ELY

FORMERLY LECTURER ON ECONOMIC HISTORY
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TO
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FELLOW AND SENIOR TUTOR OF
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PREFACE

THESE lectures, which were written at the request of Mr Victor Fisher of the British Workers' League, and have been published already, week by week, in the *British Citizen*, are now collected together in a volume. I was much disappointed that the proposal to give these lectures in London had to be abandoned, and that I was unable to deliver them myself, in Cambridge. I am very grateful to Mr G. G. Coulton, who was kind enough to read them on my behalf, as well as to the numerous friends whom I consulted on special points.

W. C.

TRINITY COLLEGE

1 November 1917

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THE COMMON WEAL

I

NATIONALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

I. INTRODUCTION

I. The term Common Weal may sound a little archaic, but it is not an inappropriate description of the subject of lectures which aim at showing how we may bring the concentrated experience of past ages to bear on the political difficulties of the present day. The term takes us far back, for it has been associated with the projects of the Kentish Peasants who agitated, once and again, for better government¹. The insurrection of which we know most was that under Wat Tyler in 1381, and it was the striking outcome of widespread discontent with the existing order in Church and State; there is real difficulty in getting at the root of these troubles. We are fortunate, however, in being able to discern, at least dimly, something of the positive aims of the insurgents. They were aiming not merely at the redress of their own particular grievances, whatever they may have been, but at the Common Weal of

¹ "Gregory's Chronicle" in *Historical Collections of a Citizen of London*, edited by J. Gairdner for the Camden Society, p. 191.

the nation as a whole,—of all localities and of all classes; and so they were ready to follow the king when he adroitly took the place of their dead leader at Mile End and shouted “I will be your leader.” The particularism of mediaeval England was the root of every sort of evil. The malcontents had had enough of the jealousies of different towns, of the quarrels of different guilds and the ambitions of privileged classes, of the disputed customs of different estates, the disabilities of the serfs and the claims of the free labourers,—and they were ready to look to the king, as one who, by his position, was raised above these rival forces and might be expected to have regard for the Common Weal of the nation as a whole.

2. That they were disappointed in their expectation, we know; but the failure need not be dismissed as a forgotten futility, for we may have the keenest sympathy with the object they had in view. During the last few years many of us have been dissatisfied with Party Government and the subordination of the good of the country as a whole to the interests of particular groups or classes; we desire a change in our system of rule, so that greater prominence may be given to the good of the nation, present and future; and we have much clearer light than the Peasants in 1381, as to the means by which this may be accomplished. During the five centuries and more, that have elapsed, since Wat Tyler’s Rebellion, there has been an extraordinary

development of the art of government,—a very much better understanding of what it is worth while to aim at, and a vastly improved machinery for attaining these aims. All would agree that remarkable progress has occurred in the country during the last three centuries, and it is worth while to enumerate the main changes which have taken place.

(A) There has been a great increase of personal liberty,—of freedom from external coercion,—and therefore of opportunities to the individual for self-discipline. So long as external control was constantly enforced by authority, the basis for the formation of habits of self-control was absent, and there could be no real reliance on self-discipline by the citizens themselves.

(B) It is also noticeable that the activities of the State have been called into operation in new directions; such elements of the Common Weal as health and education are taken account of by the State now-a-days, in a way to which our forefathers were quite unaccustomed. The whole of the humanitarian legislation, which was the product of the philanthropy of the nineteenth century, would have been regarded as impracticable and unnecessary at an earlier time.

(C) There has also been a change in the conception of sovereignty as the power which interprets and enforces the Common Weal. Modern thought is clearer and more definite, and modern ideas are

more fruitful; we are able to set the problems, with which we have to deal, in a clearer light, so as to have the best hope of solving them practically, and making still further advances in promoting and fostering the Common Weal.

3. A retrospect of progress in the past, helps to give us the right point of view for discussing the possibilities of the future. We are apt to be mistaken if we allow ourselves to be guided solely by our own preferences and temperaments in regard to political movements long ago, for they have been judged by the logic of events. Certain institutions have justified themselves by their success, while others have proved to be failures, and are to be condemned as failures. The personal sympathies and interests of the historian will of course differ according to his temperament. The vulgar will find satisfaction in praising those who were successful, and the chivalrous will show sympathy with failure; but, apart from these matters of temperament, the fact of success or failure is clear. Personal monarchy was proved a failure in England when Charles I was executed; to try to understand, as fully as we can, the precise causes of failure is an education in being fair to those with whom we may have little sympathy. Similarly in regard to the future we need not rely entirely on our own conceptions of what is right and just, but should look chiefly at what is practicable, as a step towards realising our ideal for the Common Weal. Our conception of abstract

justice gives us little help in facing the complex difficulties of society, and we are more likely to get on if we are content to consider what, under existing circumstances, is expedient for the good of the country as we see it.

There have of course been attempts to carry out what is "absolutely just" in the founding and governing of the State¹. But individuals differ greatly as to their conception of what is just as between man and man. Is it just that goods should be distributed among people according to their needs? or according to their efficiency? Are we to take the idea of justice

¹ Penn claimed to be carrying out the dictates of absolute justice in the organisation of Pennsylvania (H. Hodgkin, *Westminster Review*, June, 1901, CLV, p. 616), but it is to his credit that he did not adhere pedantically to his Quaker principles. He was obliged to compromise, for he had established a democracy though he was himself a feudal Sovereign (Bancroft, *United States*, II, p. 395). He was not a thorough-going opponent of slavery. "He endeavoured to secure to the African mental and moral culture, the rights and happiness of domestic life. His efforts were not successful, and he himself died a slave holder" (*Ib.* II, p. 403). The Welsh settlers did not regard him as punctilious in carrying out the agreement into which he had entered (C. H. Browning, *Welsh Settlement of Pennsylvania*, p. 330). The peace with the Indians did not depend entirely on the treaty with Penn, but was partly due to the fact that the tribe had been already disarmed by the Five Nations (*Dictionary of National Biography* s.v. Penn, xv, p. 758); before his death Penn felt obliged to organise a system of defence. It is impossible to regard the success of Pennsylvania, as a proof that his principles were sound, as he did not really rely on them in practice.

to the individual, which was on the whole mediaeval, or that which has superseded it in modern times?¹ We may avoid confusion by leaving this question of absolute right on one side, and fixing our attention instead on the practical progress which has been made; we may thus consider what we have learned as a nation from experience,—what maxims have been accepted because they seemed to work well for a time, and what have been discarded because they had come to work badly. In this way we can account for the extraordinary progress which has been made in forming definite ideals of the Common Weal, while we have also learned by experience to find better means of realising these ideals.

4. The experience has, of course, been in an area where there were similar institutions and similar powers of control,—in fact, where there was a consciousness of nationality. Since Edwardian times, at all events, England has been a true nationality; and this involves the recognition of a Common Weal throughout a given territorial area. There are many peoples who have not attained to this consciousness of nationality. In England, from various causes, it awoke much earlier than in Scotland²; on the Continent, the middle of the nineteenth century is spoken of as the time of the rise of nation-

¹ *Christianity and Economic Science*, p. 29.

² Under Wallace and Bruce there was an assertion of independence from England, but there was little development of national institutions till the sixteenth century.

alities, with a resuscitated Greece, a united Italy, and a united Germany. There are peoples who flourish under other political forms,—who are organised according to a blood tie, like the clans of Scotland, or who are content with the civic patriotism which was developed in the ancient world and maintained in the Middle Ages. Tribes or groups, which are satisfied with these groupings and find that they are the basis of a congenial society, are not desirous of a really national life and are unfitted for national institutions. The maintenance or revival of racial feeling is a hindrance to the growth of enthusiasm for a Common Weal in the Balkan States, and therefore to the organisation of true nationalities. During the last century there has been in America a struggle between State patriotism and State rights, and the conception of a Common Weal and true nationality for the whole of the United States. But in England there have been national life and national experience which have been growing steadily for centuries and of which we should be wise to avail ourselves.

II. NATIONALITY

5. How far we have moved in this matter can perhaps best be seen by taking the Reformation Period as a starting-point. The reign of Edward VI was a time of widespread disorder, but the various grievances of the rural and urban population were very different from those of the present

day. Agriculture was awakening to new life under the stimulus of improved opportunities for sale of produce, and capitalist organisation of wage earners was beginning to take the place which had been traditionally occupied by independent domestic workers. The capitalist system, which has triumphed both in town and country, was coming clearly into light, and the conflict between the old order and the new was very bitter¹. The grievances of the day were quite different from the social disabilities of the Peasants of 1381, or from the labour unrest of our own time, and the aims of social reformers were indefinite and vague. The situation is clearly described in the very interesting book, in the form of a dialogue, which was written in 1549, by John Hales, and entitled *A Discourse of the Common Weal of this Realm of England*². The 'knight' in this dialogue was eager to organise the religious life of the nation in independence of Rome, and to develop the economic life of the country as a whole, both as regards rural and urban industry, and by the increase of commerce, so far as it reacted on the employment of the population at home. At that time the reigning dynasty had abandoned the am-

¹ *Progress of Capitalism in England*, p. 52.

² Edited for the Camb. Univ. Press by E. Lamond. It was first printed by an unknown W. S. in 1581; he had brought it down to date and introduced an interesting discussion on the effect of the precious metals from the New World. In this form it is easily accessible in the *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. ix (1808).

bition for foreign conquests, and there was little fear of foreign invasion. England seemed able to hold aloof from international complications, as Henry VII had done; but soon after, during the reign of Elizabeth, there was a change which gave greater definiteness to the conception of the Common Weal. Defence of our shores by a navy came to be recognised as an essential element, in a way that it had never been since the time of the Danish invasions. The independence of the religious life of the nation was threatened by the Pope, the independence of the economic life of the country was threatened by the peaceful penetration of aliens, and by the Hanse league. It was in the reign of Elizabeth that Englishmen attained to full consciousness of nationality as involving these elements of independence in opposition to aggression from without. Freedom from foreign monarchy was passionately desired, especially from the sovereignty of Spain, and there was a consciousness that independent monarchy would prove a bulwark which ensured freedom for the development of national life.

6. What had been implicit in the very idea of nationality and the Common Weal of the nation, came clearly into view in the time of Elizabeth; and it was generally felt that in order that the nation might be well governed and well organised there must be sovereignty,—that a governing power to act for the Common Weal must be recog-

nised and obeyed, and that the monarchy should be accepted as having a real regard for the Common Weal and the power of protecting the Common Weal. The altered political conditions were reflected by the change which may be recognised in Political Philosophy. There had of course been much discussion during the Middle Ages of the Theory of Sovereignty; the treatise of Suarez¹ had become a recognised authority on sovereignty in general; but the claim to independent sovereignty over particular nations was comparatively new in Christendom. The views of post-reformation writers, even where general in form, are greatly affected by the particular experiences they had had themselves, and the political conditions in which they lived.

What strikes us most in looking back on the Elizabethan age, is the passionate loyalty, of statesmen and churchmen and the people at large, to the Queen; she was extraordinarily popular in spite of her vanities and vacillation, and of the meanness which characterised her, because she was recognised as being, at that time, the embodiment of the sovereignty which was essential for organising the Common Weal of the realm. In her day there was no occasion, in the ordinary mind, to separate the idea of sovereignty,—as necessary to the existence of a well ordered society,—from the personality by whom that sovereignty was exercised. It could be held that while some other form of government

¹ *Tractatus de legibus*, 1619.

was possible for a City State, a personal monarchy was needed to give unity to rule over wide territories.

III. SOVEREIGNTY

7. Gradually, however, with increased recognition of the solidarity of a nation, with better possibilities of intercommunication between all parts and the existence of an organ by which the policy of the Common Weal could be discussed and debated, the conception of sovereignty in a nationality, apart altogether from monarchy, began to be recognised as practicable. The Marquis of Montrose, who put on record the principles which inspired him in his marvellous career, writes quite clearly on the distinction between Sovereignty and Government, though he did not believe that any other form of government than personal monarchy came within the range of practical politics in Scotland in 1644¹. He seems to think of Sovereignty as a quality which is essential to any efficient government, but it is so impalpable that he can hardly find terms to describe it. "Sovereignty is a power over the people; above which power there is none upon earth; whose acts cannot be rescinded by any other; instituted by God, for His glory and the temporal and eternal happiness of men. This is it that is recorded so oft, by the wisdom of antient times, to be sacred and inviolable; the

¹ "The Political Philosophy of the Marquis of Montrose" in the *Scottish Historical Review* (July, 1917), xiv, p. 362.

“truest image and representation of the power of
“Almighty God upon earth; not to be bounded,
“disputed, meddled with at all by subjects; who
“can never handle it, though never so warily, but
“it is thereby wounded, and the public peace dis-
“turbed. Yet it is limited by the laws of God and
“nature; and some laws of nations; and by the
“fundamental laws of the country; which are those
“upon which sovereign power itself resteth, in pre-
“judice of which a King can do nothing; and those
“also which secure to the good subject his honour,
“his life, and the property of his goods. This
“power—not speaking of those who are Kings in
“name only, and in effect but *Principes Nobilitatis*
“or *Duces Belli*, nor of the arbitrary and despotic
“power, where one is head and all the rest slaves,
“but of that which is sovereign over free subjects—
“is still one and the same, in points essential, wher-
“ever it be, whether in the person of a monarch, or
“in a few principal men, or in the Estates of the
“people. The essential points of sovereignty are
“these:—To make laws; to create principal officers;
“to make peace and war; to give grace to men con-
“demned by law; and to be the last to whom ap-
“pellation is made. There be others, too, which are
“comprehended in those set down; but because
“majesty doeth not so clearly shine in them they
“are here omitted. These set down are inalienable,
“indivisible, incommunicable, and belong to the
“sovereign power primitively in all sorts of govern-

"ments. They cannot subsist in a body composed "of individuities¹."

In describing the functions of a sovereign State, and attributing to it will and reason, Montrose comes very near to regarding it as a personality, but he is at least clear in distinguishing sovereignty from government. There are various forms of government through which sovereignty is exercised; the forms of government may be changed from time to time, but sovereignty, which is essential to the existence of an ordered community, must remain through all these changes. There always must be somewhere an interpreter of the Common Weal, and a power to administer affairs so as to give the Common Weal effect, if any community is to flourish; the government is the organ, and always an imperfect organ, by which sovereignty is exercised. The community cannot flourish if the government does its work badly, and misinterprets the Common Weal or fails to put it into effect. The prosperity of the country depends on a recognition by the people of the success of the government in exercising sovereignty; and there will be revolution if the government is generally and utterly condemned for its want of success in exercising its authority aright.

8. The distinction which was thus drawn between sovereignty and government is at least illustrated by the extraordinary changes which have taken place recently in Russia. The sovereignty in

¹ Napier, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose*, 1, p. 281.

that country was exercised by a personal monarch, the Czar, and his government was overthrown by the revolution which roused so much sympathy in democratic countries. At first it appeared that the democracy had succeeded in obtaining recognition as being able to interpret and enforce the Common Weal; and the Russian success in Galicia was claimed as a proof that the democratic government was firmly established; but the Extremists asserted themselves; they were apparently enthusiasts for personal liberty, who resented not only the government of the Czar, but the existence of sovereignty of any kind. In the army there was an entire collapse of discipline, which seems to have been directly due to a disregard of the Common Weal and a determination on the part of many of the soldiers to lose no chance of indulging their land hunger. Whether it may be possible to induce these 'individualities' to act for the Common Weal remains to be seen; but it is certain that, for the present, there has been a terrible set back for national independence and the opportunities of national development, while at the same time numbers of men are likely to be disillusioned as to the benefit which comes to individuals from the diffusion of anarchy. The men, whether in German pay or not, who turned the revolution in government into an attack on national sovereignty, have much to answer for, both as regards the welfare of their country and the benefit of the individuals who followed them.

II

PERSONAL MONARCHY AND PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT

I. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

I. We are all familiar with the seventeenth century, as the period when attempts to establish Absolutism in England were foiled and a great step was taken in the direction of democracy by the establishment of constitutional monarchy at the Revolution of 1689; but less attention has been paid to the fact that during this period the activities of civil government were almost completely secularised. From some points of view, it might seem enough to follow the pioneers in the progress towards secularised democracy and to indicate the obstacles with which they had to contend; but for our purpose it is necessary to look at the other side as well, and try to see the reasons for the failure of personal monarchy. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the personal monarchy, as it had been exercised by Queen Elizabeth, was not only acceptable, but popular in England; under a personal monarchy the State may attain a very high degree of efficiency, so that personal monarchy is generally accepted in Germany, in the present

day, as the best form of government. In order to see how the revolution came about in England, and to understand why personal monarchy was no longer acceptable here as a form of government, we must look at the causes of failure.

2. It is to be noticed that the task which the various governments of Great Britain were called on to face during the seventeenth century was really an impossible one. They wished to rule England and Scotland as one nation; Laud endeavoured to assimilate Scottish ecclesiastical institutions to those of England, and failed; the Westminster Assembly endeavoured to assimilate English ecclesiastical institutions to those of Scotland, and failed. It was impossible to treat the two nations as one, or to bring the people of both countries under similar institutions. And this was not merely owing to ecclesiastical differences, but to economic habits and interests, as well as to differences of constitution. After the Union of the Crowns, Scottish commercial interests were subordinated to the political aims which governed English policy¹, and Scottish commercial practice, which had been directed by the Convention of Royal Boroughs, was different in many ways from the organisation of merchant adventurers in trading companies, which was the ordinary condition in London and other English towns. There does not seem to have been

¹ T. Keith, *Commercial Relations of England and Scotland*, pp. 16, 48.

any movement in Scotland analogous to the enclosing of common waste and common fields, with the break up of the custom of a common tillage, which was causing so much unrest in rural England.

Constitutionally too, the countries were extraordinarily different; the Scottish Parliament was of very slight importance and could not aspire to be an effective check upon the Crown; while on the other hand, the English Parliament was thoroughly aware of its long traditions, and of its influence in the affairs of the realm, and was eager to preserve its privileges. In Scotland, it was the great families and General Assemblies of the Church, rather than the House of Commons, who could be in any sense a check on the proceedings of the Crown.

3. James, as we can see from his speech to the House of Commons¹, was aware of the differences of the two countries and of the difficulty of treating them as one. He knew Scotland well, and was possibly led into difficulties with English merchants and English Parliaments because he relied too much on his Scottish experience, and did not enter easily into the feelings of his new subjects. But no greater success attended the efforts of Cromwell, who introduced one system of government both north and south of the Tweed. The two countries could not be ruled as one nation because the peoples had no sense of a Common Weal. Ecclesiastically, economically, and constitutionally they

¹ *Commons Journal* (31st March, 1607), I, p. 362.

were different. There was a long standing sense of Common Weal in England; but Scotland was so much broken up by different attachments and interests, that there was very little sense of a common life throughout the whole country, and none of a welfare that was common to England and Scotland alike. They were not at one, and could not be treated as one. The personal monarchy of the Stuarts was face to face with an impossible task.

The Union of the Crowns had, however, forced the two countries into contact, and the reaction of one upon the other brought about changes which rendered it possible to bring the two nations under one parliamentary government by the act of union under Queen Anne. English influence had triumphed constitutionally; the English Parliament, with its traditions and privileges, was accepted as the chief organ of government throughout Great Britain. In commerce on the other hand, the Scottish influence prevailed: the exclusive Companies, like the Merchant Adventurers or the Turkey Company, fell into the background. The interlopers made serious inroads on the monopoly of the East India Company¹, and the greater freedom for the employment of private capital within the realm², which was characteristic of Scotland, came to be adopted for the whole of Great Britain.

¹ *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, II, p. 416.

² *Christianity and Politics*, pp. 71-86.

4. The religious differences between the two countries could not be compromised, indeed they became more accentuated, and left the government of Great Britain to assume a more decidedly secular character than had been possible in the time of Queen Elizabeth and John Knox. North of the Tweed, the State handed over the care of the poor and the education of the children to a national Church¹, on which it conferred authority to exercise discipline in matters of morality which were not provided for by the law of the land. In England, provision for the poor had long been made by parochial authorities; and there was no interference by the State with the instruction of the young and the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline in each parish by the traditional authority of the parish priest. The Common Weal of Great Britain, as a matter of parliamentary care, was almost wholly secular.

5. In Scotland, the government had delegated to a national Church its responsibilities in regard to Christian care of the poor and the education of the young, while in England it had already provided parochially for the relief of the poor, and the State took no national cognisance of the education of the young till the nineteenth century. Hence it came about that in both countries it was possible for the State to confine its activities almost entirely to secular functions, and that the religious life of the nation, which had had so much prominence in

¹ *Scots Acts* 1690, c. 5.

the sixteenth century, dropped altogether out of the conception of the Common Weal which government could endeavour to promote.

It may not be out of place to remark, that the delegation of all spiritual matters to a national Church, in Scotland, had a great effect on the growth of the sense of a Common Weal, and of nationality, throughout the northern kingdom. On the other hand, the acceptance of a secularised government in England, was largely due to the influence of Puritanism, which had protested against the ecclesiastical institutions of the realm, especially the parochial system, since it desired to substitute congregations formed by the association of devout individuals. The Puritans distinguished strongly between religion as a personal thing, and the institutions of society; since they had failed to make the institutions of society really religious, according to their standard, they were prepared to accept a secularised national government. On the other hand, those who were actively interested in promoting and furthering the religious life of the English Church, believed that they could do so most effectively by founding voluntary institutions rather than by relying on government aid. Dr Boyle and Dr Bray were energetic in founding the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; and the failure of Bishop Berkeley to secure practical encouragement from the government for his proposed college in the

Bermudas, marks the fact that it had become impossible to rely on the English government to promote religious enterprise throughout the Empire.

These were the main steps by which the public in Great Britain, without obviously becoming less religious, acquiesced in the new conception of the Common Weal; they were prepared to recognise a Christian State as primarily concerned with secular affairs, and as having little part in the enforcement of religious duty or the promotion of religious enterprise. The secularisation of civil government, at the time of the Union of England and Scotland, is sometimes spoken of as a triumph of the principles of Liberty of Conscience and of Toleration: but this is not quite accurate. Toleration is a habit of mind which must be cultivated personally; its counterfeit is indifference to things we do not regard as important, and this is not a virtue at all. The power of tolerating opinions and practices which they regard as mistaken, and even mischievous, can be most easily acquired by those who are conscious of the limits of their own intelligence, and are therefore prepared to feel that there may be a seed of good in things they regard as evil, and that it is wisest to let them alone¹. This habit of mind is much more alien to the intellectuals, who are unconscious of mistakes of their own, and believe they are entirely guided by reason. They have much more

¹ S. Matt. xiii. 29.

difficulty in excusing those who appear to discard the guidance of reason, and differ from them in opinion. And what is a virtue in the individual need not be essential to the good of the State. The parliament of the United Kingdom ceased to exercise coercive power in regard to ecclesiastical institutions, but it was not indifferent to religion. Religious ordinances north of the Tweed had been already provided for by creating a national Church, and in England the parochial organisation, which had existed time out of mind, was maintained. Parliament at the time of the Union gave no encouragement to the view that the maintenance and dissemination of any and every private opinion was desirable for the Common Weal.

II. STRAINED RELATIONS

6. (A) It may be doubted whether any prince or potentate could have succeeded in the attempt to unite under one government two nations which had such different conceptions of the Common Weal, but it is interesting to follow the steps in King James' failure. He had a high ideal of what a king should be, and he was not conscious of cherishing any aims which allowed his personal ambitions to interfere with the welfare of his subjects. As he said, in his first speech to Parliament which Locke¹ quotes with approval: "When I have done all that I can for you,

¹ *Civil Government*, § 199.

"I do nothing but that which I am bound to do,
"and am accountable to God for the contrary: for
"I do acknowledge that the special and greatest
"point of difference that is betwixt a rightful king
"and an usurping tyrant is in this; that whereas the
"proud and ambitious tyrant doth think his king-
"dom and people are only ordained for the satis-
"faction of his desires and unreasonable appetites;
"the righteous and just king doth, by the contrary,
"acknowledge himself to be ordained for the pro-
"curing of the wealth and prosperity of his people,
"and that his greatest and principal worldly felicity
"must consist in their prosperity. If you be rich
"I cannot be poor; if you be happy I cannot but
"be fortunate; and I protest that your welfare shall
"ever be my greatest care and contentment....
"As the head is ordained for the body and not the
"body for the head; so must a righteous king know
"himself to be ordained for his people, and not his
"people for him: for although a king and people be
"related, yet can he be no king if he want people
"and subjects. But there be many people in the
"world that lack a head, wherefore I will never be
"ashamed to confess it my principal honour, to be
"the great servant of the commonwealth, and ever
"think the prosperity thereof to be my greatest
"felicity¹." The stress which James laid on the
responsibility of a monarch to God distinguished
his position from that of any royalists who attri-

¹ Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, I, p. 986.

buted to the monarch inherent rights of his own¹. The king made no attempt to intervene when the House of Commons took offence at expressions in Cowell's *Interpreter*.

King James was also conscious that it was through himself personally that great benefits had come to Great Britain. He refers to the "Blessings which "God hath, in my person, bestowed upon you all, "wherein I protest, I do more glory at the same for "your weal, than for any particular respect to my "own reputation or advantage therein. The first "then of the blessings which God hath jointly with "my person sent unto you, is outward peace; that "is peace abroad with all foreign neighbours.... "The second great blessing that God hath, with my "person, sent unto you, is peace within, and that "in a double form; first, by my descent lineally "out of the loins of Henry VII is reunited and "confirmed in me the union of the two princely "roses of the two Houses of Lancaster and York.... "But the union of these two princely houses is "nothing comparable to the union of two ancient "and famous kingdoms, which is the other inward "peace annexed to my person²." There is at least an element of the absolutism of Louis XIV who claimed "L'état c'est moi"; for James identifies the Common Weal with wise personal conduct on his own part.

¹ Locke (*Government*, § 9) appears to attribute this doctrine to Filmer.

² Cobbett, *op. cit.* I, pp. 978, 979.

(B) There is no reason to believe that this ideal of monarchy, as put forward by King James, was unacceptable to the English public at the time of his accession. Doubtless there was little enthusiasm for his Scottish mannerisms and his Scottish friends; but the possibilities which he sketched, of co-operation between the subjects and the king for the Common Weal, seem to have been generally acceptable; and certainly the speech of Sir Edward Phelips, the newly chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, indicates accordance with the views which the King had expressed; “As the supreme and all powerful
“king of heaven hath created man to govern His
“works, so He but deposes terrestrial kings, in
“whom His image was, to govern men; but yet so,
“as still to think, that they themselves are but men;
“and to that end adorned with three imperial en-
“signs of honour; a crown, a sceptre, and a sword;
“commanding to the crown reverence, to the sceptre
“obedience, and to the sword fear: wherewith, in
“His divine distribution of Kings and kingdoms,
“He hath magnified and invested your sacred per-
“son, in the imperial throne of this most victorious
“and happy nation, wherein you now do, and
“Nestor like, long may, sit; not as a conqueror, by
“the sword, but as an undoubted inheritor by the
“sceptre; not as a step-father, by match or alliance,
“but as a true tender father, by descent of nature,
“to whom we your children are truly naturalised
“in our subjection, and from whom in our loyalty

“we expect unto us a paternal protection: the ark
“of government of which kingdom hath ever been
“steered by the laws of the same; and these dis-
“tributed to the jurisdiction of several courts of
“justice; the commanding and imperial court
“whereof is this your Majesty’s great and high
“court of parliament; by whose power only new
“laws are to be instituted, imperfect laws reformed,
“and inconvenient laws abrogated; whose justice
“therein is such, and so absolute, that no such laws
“can either be instituted, reformed, or abrogated
“but by the unity of the commons agreement, the
“Lords accord, and your majesty’s royal and regal
“assent; only to your highness’s prerogative nul-
“lity, by your own disassent to their conclusions,
“belongeth; for that this court standeth com-
“pounded of two powers; the one ordinary, the
“other absolute: ordinary, in the lords and com-
“mons proceedings: but in your highness, absolute,
“either negatively to frustrate, or affirmatively to
“confirm but not to institute¹.” When there was
so much accordance of view between the king and
his people, there seemed to be every prospect that
they might each play their parts harmoniously for
the good of the realm.

7. The hopes that had been cherished at the be-
ginning of the reign were, however, soon
dashed to the ground. The spirit of compromise, to
which the English readily adjust themselves, was

¹ *Ibid.* p. 989.

alien to the mind of King James. He was, to a great extent, a pedant and wished to have the rights of the Crown clearly defined. So too, in the House of Commons there were a large number of lawyers and they were eager to have the privileges of parliament clearly defined and acknowledged; it was through disputes, which arose in regard to the claims on each side, that the severance between the monarch and the representatives of the people began. The first great difficulty arose in regard to the claim of the Crown made in 1614 by Salisbury, Lord of the Treasury, to levy impositions on imported goods; this raised the whole question as to whether the king had a right by his prerogative to impose such duties without the sanction of parliament¹. It seems to have been Bacon's endeavour to avoid raising the issue; he had no wish to see the king in a position in which he did not need his subjects' help, still less to have the kingly office stripped of grace and dignity by the people; and he thought an accommodation might be come to by which the government of the realm could be carried on in a spirit of compromise. A further step was, however, taken in the direction of treating the king and his subjects as two parties whose rights against each other could be defined, when the Great Contract was mooted² in regard to the royal rights of wardship and other feudal obligations. It was thus that

¹ Spedding, *Evenings with a Reviewer*, I, p. 353.

² Spedding, *op. cit.* II, 169.

during the reign of James I, the king and the representatives of the people fell apart, with distinct rights and claims, and that the first step was taken in the course towards disorganisation and anarchy which Montrose regarded as hopeless¹.

III. THE FAILURE OF PERSONAL MONARCHY

8. The failure of personal monarchy, under James I and Charles I, was chiefly due to inability on the part of the Crown to interpret the Common Weal aright. This was most noticeable in regard to economic matters. The kings were indeed far-seeing in the promotion of great public works of colonization and improvement, and they showed an intelligent desire to develop the resources of the country. They were keen to promote commerce and to increase the navy; but in their attempts to foster and promote industry their failures were conspicuous, for they were brought into conflict with the rising class of capitalists, and especially with the City of London. They made so many errors of judgment that the wisdom of the king and his council was completely discredited; parliament ceased to be content to deal as a High Court² with particular cases of grievance, and came, after the Restoration, to devote itself more and more to directing the commercial and industrial policy of the country as a whole, by legislation.

¹ Napier, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose*, I, p. 287.

² McIlwain, *The High Court of Parliament*, p. 110.

9. James I and Charles I also failed to retain the power of independent action in emergencies. As King of Scotland, James I had never been hampered in carrying out his policy for the realm by parliament, and the control which the House of Commons began to exercise in England seemed to him inconsistent with his dignity as king. But it was in the reign of his son that parliament obtained the power, not merely of criticising expenditure, but of completely controlling the funds at the disposal of government. In Tudor times the Crown had become more and more dependent on taxation, and we also see the increasing importance of the existence of credit and the power of borrowing. The destinies of Europe were already greatly affected by the decisions of financiers¹; in the time of Charles I borrowing had become a regular practice in carrying on the affairs of the State. When, however, in 1642, Charles I desired to borrow a large sum of money, he found that he was unable to procure it on his own credit, and he was forced to borrow on the joint credit of King, Lords and Commons. The King no longer stood personally alone in the power of borrowing and had therefore no freedom to deal with emergencies. The importance of this step in the process by which sovereign power passed from the King to the people, was manifest

¹ Compare the well-known anecdote about Sir Thomas Gresham and the Armada, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, II, p. 146 n.

at that time, as¹ Charles was forced to divest himself of his regal power of dissolving parliament in order to obtain the additional security which was necessary before he could borrow the money. These may at all events be taken as illustrations of the reasons why personal monarchy was condemned as a failure. It was unable to justify itself as interpreting the Common Weal aright, and it was unable to retain the power of controlling the public purse either on ordinary or extraordinary occasions. But though personal monarchy was a failure in Great Britain, sovereignty survived. "Levellers" appear to have resented this persistence², but sovereignty

¹ 16 Charles I, cap. 17. And in the Record Edition of the *Statutes of the Realm*, p. 103.

² The struggles of the Levellers are of great interest, as they illustrate the difficulty of putting into practice the principles which were subsequently promulgated by Locke (Pease, *Leveller Movement*, iv, p. 120). They denied the authority of any existing government and claimed that England had returned into a state of nature (*Ibid.* p. 193); but it was hardly the primitive state of nature, as the army were anxious to secure the arrears of payment which had been promised them by the parliament whose authority they now disowned. The Levellers were anxious to form a civil society by adopting a written constitution which should be a permanent safeguard against either royalist or parliamentary encroachments upon personal liberty. As the Levellers were, in many ways, opportunists, and their position varied from time to time they may easily be convicted of inconsistencies, especially in regard to the position of those who were not 'well affected' (*Ibid.* p. 270), or who did not agree to their proposals (*Ibid.* p. 213). At all events their notion of the Common Weal was very vague,

was exercised for a time by Cromwell and eventually passed to parliamentary government.

and it is not clear whether they desired one government for the whole nation, or whether they preferred that England should be broken up into a number of county or city states (*Ibid.* pp. 134, 360).

III

THE MECHANISM OF SOCIETY

I. CHANGES IN THE AIM OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

I. Two distinct aims can be traced in the writings on political subjects in Great Britain and indeed in Europe during the seventeenth century; many of them were mainly concerned with justifying the political action of some particular party or power¹. But the study of political philosophy came to be pursued with another purpose,—as a guide to future action and not merely with reference to the past. The governments of all European countries were being recast as a consequence of the break up of Christendom which had occurred at the Reformation, and there was room for much discussion as to the principles on which they should be recast, but there was a general agreement that the sovereign State ought to be regarded as instituted in accordance with Divine law or with the law of

¹ Hotmann and Languet adduced principles in support of Huguenot resistance to the French Crown. P. Janet, *Histoire de la science politique*, II, p. 155. These were adopted and utilised by Boucher in defence of the League, and as an apology for regicide. *Ibid.* II, p. 207.

nature. An instance is furnished by George Buchanan, who was steeped in the new learning, and who was entrusted with the training of James VI; in his *De jure regni* he¹ has left a record of the principles, in accordance with Calvin's doctrine, which he laid down for his pupil. But when the *Leviathan* of Hobbes was published principles which had been generally accepted were discarded; it created almost as much consternation among political thinkers as had been done by the *Prince* of Machiavelli. The *Prince* had appeared to be a justification of tyranny on the part of a personal monarch; the doctrine of Hobbes was a justification of absolutism, as it had borne sway in the Latin monarchies, and especially as it was being organised in France. Hobbes shocked the moral sense of the day by representing the sovereign State, not as an institution which originated with Divine approval or according to natural order, but as artificial and accepted by men who submitted themselves and their children to the rule of a conqueror. It treated all government as if it were based on the right of the conqueror and could not be questioned.

2. The doctrine of Locke on *Civil Government*, which has been of enormous importance to the Anglo-Saxon peoples, was to some extent a development of Hobbes, and to some extent a reaction from his principles. Locke followed Hobbes in regarding civil society as artificial, but differed from

¹ *Cambridge History of English Literature*, IV, p. 303.

him in tracing its origin not to individual fear, but to the effort of the individual to pursue his own interest. Locke was also at pains to preserve the conception of natural law as presiding over the formation of the community at first, and as paramount as regards the exercise of its powers. Just as Hobbes's system resulted in a justification of the absolutism of the State, so Locke's system involved the assertion of the absolutism of the individual citizen. Its attractiveness lay in the fact that it seemed to offer a complete barrier against arbitrary rule, since it attributed the formation of the State to the interest of the individual, while it states a principle which seems to give a safeguard to personal liberty; but when we examine it closely we see that it is superficial and does not afford any real solution of the problems. That everyone has a right to do as he likes, in so far as this does not conflict with the equal liberty of other people¹, sounds very fair, but it does not carry us far, since it does not mark the limits of the liberty that is common to all, and each man is judge in his own cause as to the limits of the rights he may enjoy; rather than submit to encroachments on personal liberty he would be justified in reasserting the rights alleged in a primitive condition with its natural liberties. Even if Locke's doctrine afforded a guarantee for personal liberty,

¹ "The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited, 'he must not make himself a nuisance to other people.'" J. S. Mill, *Liberty* (1864), p. 101.

it takes no account of growth, and is insufficient as a basis for the formation or maintenance of organised society.

In looking back, we can see that Locke's attention was concentrated on issues which were much before him in his own days,—the formation of governments. Popular governments were being authorised in the American colonies, and Locke had himself drawn up a constitution for South Carolina; his treatise might suffice for an explanation of the creation of popular governments which were subordinate to another authority, such as the freedom for self-government which cities or colonies enjoyed under a charter. But though the power of the Mother Country lay in the background, the element of authority cannot be rightly ignored in any attempt to explain the genesis of society.

(A) There have, as a matter of fact, been many principles at work in the growth of nationalities and in the sovereign power of each nationality. In England the element of conquest was important, and we look back to William the Conqueror as having done much to combine the separate tribal kingdoms into one country. The ambitions of the monarchs, and the desire to control the arbitrariness of monarchs, have combined to evoke a sense of Common Weal throughout the country; and the evils of disputed succession to the Crown told in favour of heredity rather than elective monarchy. It was under a monarchy that the sense of nationality,

and the willingness to accept a national sovereign as a personal organ, through which the Common Weal might be interpreted, were formed; and in the seventeenth century this tradition was being transferred to popular government. The really important problem was to account for the authority of the popular sovereignty, which was being substituted for personal sovereignty; and this could not be adequately explained by referring to the single principle of individual consent, or going back to a supposed state of nature and a social contract by which individuals consented to form a civil society.

(B) Locke is not very successful in showing that a political society could ever be formed by the mere action of 'individuities' each pursuing his own interest. The personal sacrifices which may be required of men in civil societies are very real, and the citizen has to submit to powers which he cannot confer—a state of affairs which Locke dismisses as inconceivable¹. But public duties and public responsibilities cannot be logically derived from private rights and duties². The rights and duties of any individual depend on the society in which he lives. In one society certain rights are recognised and duties enforced, and in another society the recognised rights and duties of the citizens are different; but there is no ground for regarding the unrelated and isolated individual as under any social

¹ *Civil Government*, § 23.

² T. H. Green, *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 44.

obligations which can be enforced, or as possessing any political rights which can be sustained.

3. Locke does not after all face the fundamental problem as to the origin of sovereignty. The civil society formed in accordance with his principles, would not be what men have understood by a sovereign State, and would differ from it in important particulars.

(A) It would have no effective coercive power: and Locke himself admits that this is essential to a political society¹. There would be no means of enforcing the performance of duties towards the public, or of awakening in the private person a sense of obligation to promote the Common Weal. Thus civil society, as Locke describes it, is merely, when once constituted, a self-acting machine in which the private aims and interests of individuals are free to work. "For where any number of men
"have, by the consent of every individual, made a
"community, they have thereby made that com-
"munity one body, with a power to act as one body,
"which is only by the will and determination of the
"majority. For that which acts (*sic*) any com-
"munity, being only the consent of the individuals
"of it, and it being one body must move one way;
"it is necessary the body should move that way
"whither the greater force carries it, which is the
"consent of the majority²." For Locke the Common Weal is only a restraining force, or at best is

¹ *Civil Government*, § 3.

² *Ibid.* § 96.

attained incidentally through the operation of private interests.

(B) Civil Society, as Locke conceives it, has not a continuous life of its own which may extend throughout many generations. He does indeed hold that no individual can secede from a civil society when once formed¹, but subsequent generations do not carry it on as a matter of course. All persons, who arrive at years of discretion, have a right to "choose "what society they will join themselves to, what "common wealth they will put themselves under²." The English born may prefer to be "a Russian, or "French, or Turk or Prussian or perhaps Italian," though there will always be a temptation to any one who is the heir to real property in England to remain an Englishman³.

It is at this point that Burke joins issue with the doctrine of Locke. He says: "Society is indeed a "contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of "mere occasional interest may be dissolved at pleasure—but the State ought not to be considered "nothing better than a partnership agreement in "a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco or "some other such low concern, to be taken up for a "little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by "the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked upon "with other reverence; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal

¹ *Civil Government*, §§ 121, 243.

² *Ibid.* § 73.

³ *Ibid.* § 191.

“existence of a temporary and perishable nature. “It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in “all art; a partnership in every virtue and in all “perfection. As the ends of such a partnership “cannot be obtained in many generations, it be- “comes a partnership not only between those who “are living, but between those who are living, “those who are dead, and those who are to be “born¹.” The desire to enjoy his private property without the inconveniences of not having an umpire to whom he can appeal in case of disputes and of being obliged to act in self-defence in punishing crime, is according to Locke the main motive for entering civil society at all², and the State continues to exist as a sort of fiduciary trustee, which guarantees the safety of property, but plays no active part in managing it³.

(c) The narrow rôle which Locke assigns to government is very different from the activities which sovereign States have constantly claimed to exercise. They have regarded the Common Weal, or the public good, as something which they ought to foster positively, by enforcing “the penalty of death “and consequently all less penalties for the regulat- “ing and preserving of property, and by employing “the force of the community in the execution of “such laws, and in the defence of the common

¹ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Works, I, p. 417.

² *Civil Government*, § 124.

³ *Ibid.* § 94.

“wealth from foreign injury; and all this only for “the public good¹.” But in spite of Locke’s verbal admissions of the need of active measures on the part of the State, the subject of the Common Weal is hardly discussed by him, and is only mentioned as a negative principle by which encroachments on individual liberties are to be detected and condemned, as breaches of the trust placed in princes², or as laying down the limits of individual liberty³.

II. PERSONAL LIBERTY

4. Locke’s philosophy has been and is extremely popular; it is very plausible and takes us a long way, but it is defective as an account of the relation between the individual personally and the State, and it is unreliable as a practical guide. Those who are satisfied with it as an explanation of the mechanism of popular governments, tend to regard sovereignty as a thing which is so impalpable that it may be ignored, and to take for granted moral obligations,—such as obedience on the part of the subjects and responsibilities on the part of the magistrates,—so far as they are of practical importance. Locke’s principles appeared to find expression in the parliamentary government which followed the Revolution of 1689, and to lie behind the principles of constitutional monarchy which were adopted with enthusiasm by the Whigs. The doc-

¹ *Civil Government*, § 3.

² *Ibid.* §§ 161, 221.

³ *Ibid.* § 8.

trines of Locke also put on record the assumptions on which the American Declaration of Independence rested, and they have been generally accepted among Anglo-Saxon peoples as almost axiomatic. They are prized because they appear to safeguard individual liberty; and the fundamental reason for criticising them lies in this, that they did not sufficiently distinguish the sort of liberty which it is worth while to safeguard, or which is compatible with organised society.

5. Locke again and again disclaims unrestrained liberty as inconsistent with civil society. He repudiates Filmer's suggestion that the critics of monarchy advocate "a liberty for every one to do "what he lists, to live as he pleases, and not to be "tied by any laws," and insists that the freedom of men under government, which he deems so important, is "to have a standing rule to live by, common "to every one of that society, and made by the "legislative power erected in it; a liberty to follow "my own will in all things, where the rule pre- "scribes not; and not to be subjected to the in- "constant, uncertain, unknown arbitrary will of "another man; as freedom of nature is to be under "no other restraint than the law of nature¹." Unfortunately Locke gives no clear indication of the standing rule to live by or of the liberty which is permissible under natural law. The Common Weal for him is a mere negative rule, and does not afford

¹ *Civil Government*, § 22.

any positive guidance. The problem between personal liberty and the legitimate demands of the State can only be solved by recognising that self-restraint is compatible with personal freedom. Personal liberty is to be prized—not as if it were an end in itself, but as a condition which gives opportunities for training individuals in self-discipline. The popular mind is apt to confuse freedom for the individual to do as he likes, with the freedom from external authority which gives the individual the opportunity of exercising self-discipline. It is in the latter sense that personal freedom is to be prized, and that its privileges cannot be over-rated. The important question is whether the individual of his own accord, uses his liberty so as to promote the Common Weal of the society in which he lives, or whether he uses it solely in his own interest. In conscious efforts after the Common Weal made by the individual of his own accord, liberty and obligation are completely reconciled, and in no other way is complete reconciliation possible.

6. While it is generally admitted in the present day that Locke's account of the emergence of civil society from the state of nature is fanciful and unreal, there are many who hold to his philosophy as a fair account of the working of civil society when once it is formed, and think that this may be conveniently regarded as a self-acting mechanism consisting of individuals each of whom is free to pursue his private aims. This view of society was very current

in England in the early nineteenth century, and there was a tendency in many quarters to think that all would be well if vested interests and selfish monopolists were got rid of, and each individual were free to manage his own affairs in his own way. It was especially in the economic sphere that this opinion had the greatest hold, since the advocates of *laissez faire* contended that if each individual were free to manage his own wealth as best he could, the aggregate of wealth would be increased more rapidly than in any other way. But *laissez faire* is now discredited; even in the economic sphere it has become clear that there may be danger of a one-sided development of national life, to the neglect of other equally important elements of national economy. The growth of commerce may take place in such a fashion as to fail to react on national industry, and to bring about waste in regard to the possibilities of production which exist in the land of the country. Still more, the free play of individuals may result in the sacrifice of the future to the present; in private life the selfish parent may disregard the claims of his family altogether. The individual life is shorter than the life of the community; and there is constant danger that individuals, concentrating their attention on immediate gain, should be comparatively indifferent to the development of national resources in the long run. This has been abundantly clear in the history of the clearing of some American States, and there

has been need of protective legislation to prevent the waste of national resources; but it is also true in old countries, and particularly in connection with proposals for afforestation. The economic mechanism is wonderfully complex and effective, it provides in an extraordinary way for the varied needs of the population, but it is not wise to trust to it as self-acting and to regard all attempts to control it as unnecessary.

While this is becoming obvious with regard to economic affairs, it is also noticeable that the government of the country in other respects cannot be satisfactorily carried on if it is left to private persons to pursue their private aims so far as they can. This is true, even in regard to the 'police-state' and the protection of person and property; such protection is important for all individuals, but not equally important for all. The differences between the rich and the poor show themselves in the differences of legislation which each would desire. The poor might approve of legislation for the distribution of property which the rich would regard as spoliation. Unless each is aiming at the Common Weal apart from private interest, there can be no hope of a reasonable compromise. The self-acting of private individuals, as we know them, is not likely to bring about legislative measures which favour the development of the community as a whole, but is more likely to express itself in class legislation.

When we go further and ask how far the 'Kultur-

staat' is possible, as the outcome of self-acting individualism, it becomes clear that where questions of health and education and cultivation are considered, the differences of temperament among individuals come to be of paramount importance. Though there may be some agreement as to what the State should put down, there is very little, at present, as to the things which it should foster; there would even be a difference of opinion as to the importance of cultivating patriotism¹. So far from the mechanism of society consisting in the uncontrolled free-play of individuals as we find them, there is need to form the individual character so that he may be able to take his place as a part of the social machine. This was a truth which Mill recognised, for he felt that his ideal stationary State could only prosper among individuals who had a higher degree of intelligence and self-discipline than he observed in his own generation².

III. THE CONTROL OF THE MECHANISM

7. The conception of society as a mechanism is useful and instructive; for many purposes we do not need to go outside it; it is most important that the mechanism should work smoothly, not only the economic mechanism, but the legislative mechanism and the administrative mechanism as well; but it is a mistake to suppose that the State is

¹ Inge, in *Quarterly Review*, CCCXLIV, July, 1915.

² Mill, *Political Economy*, IV, vi, 1.

only a mechanism, or that we can, from this point of view, get a complete account of all the elements that have to be considered in the government; civil society is not, and cannot be treated with advantage as, a mere self-acting mechanism. A crew in an eight-oared boat is a mechanism; it is the part of the coach to render the mechanism as perfect as possible; but there are elements that are not mechanical, which are essential to success in the race. There must be judgment, and there must be grit, and staying power, or the machine will go to pieces; and, however perfect the mechanism of a State may be, there are moral elements which must be brought into play; Humanitarianism and Philanthropy were needed to check the worst abuses of *laissez faire*. No State can prosper unless there is public spirit and a willingness to undergo sacrifice for the Common Weal. No State can prosper, unless there is a sense of obligation, along with the possession of the powers and privileges that have come down as a heritage from the past; and no State can prosper unless there is a sense of responsibility to posterity for the manner in which these powers are exercised. The recognition that these characteristics are essential, implies a belief that the life of the State is not merely mechanical but moral¹ as well. To regard

¹ Great stress was laid on these moral elements by Burke, and his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* were criticised by Sir James Mackintosh in *Vindiciae Gallicae* in which he strongly insists on the theory of the State as a self-acting mechanism, p. 113.

the individual as absolute, and as that for which the State exists¹, is to have a very inadequate conception of the State either in its formation or in its working.

8. Moral questions always lie in the background in political matters, though it may be only occasionally that they come into great prominence; but the present war is a crisis in which the issues turn wholly on what is moral, and the ordinary mechanism of a State has become relatively unimportant. There is one great obstacle to the declaration of peace at this moment, and it lies in the moral character which the Allies, and many of the neutral nations, attribute rightly or wrongly to the German government and those who support it. The promises of the German government are regarded as worthless, and none of the Allies is ready to trust to any pledge which they may give. Pacifists who regard a treaty as a treaty, and a promise as a promise, seem to be merely foolish to those who insist that it depends on the character of an individual and of a government whether their promises are worth anything or not. From the experience which Belgium has had of the worth of solemn promises made by Germany it has come to be a widely diffused opinion that the promises of the German government are worth nothing at all.

This question of moral character is involved in all discussions as to the continuance of the war and

¹ Woodrow Wilson, *The State*, p. 582.

there is much to be said for the view that questions of character had to do with the outbreak of the war. It was easily possible for Mr Norman Angell and others, to demonstrate that war must seriously interfere with the mechanism of society, and that it was never desirable in the interests of the mechanism of society that any nation should engage in war. But he ignored the moral factors. There was, on the one hand, the German ambition to give a greatly increased scope to German industry and commerce, and to place herself in a position in which she could exploit other nations for her advantage, irrespective of the means employed. But this ambition would hardly, in itself, have sufficed to bring about the attempt, unless it had been offered a great opportunity. It is difficult to see how those who had habitually afforded the Germans the desired opportunities can disclaim the responsibility of having contributed to the outbreak of the war; they were guilty of an error of judgment by putting temptation in the way of an ambitious State. In all cases of the indulgence of passion, the tempter may be guilty as well as the tempted, and Germany was greatly tempted. Bethmann-Hollweg appears to have been deceived by British Pacifists into thinking that Great Britain would remain neutral, and that she had neither the will nor the power to make effective resistance; and there is little wonder that the Germans² are embittered by having been led into such disastrous miscalculation.

IV

GOOD AND BAD GOVERNMENT

I. CRITERIA OF GOVERNMENT

If the State is regarded as only a mechanism we cannot distinguish its action qualitatively as good or bad; these moral terms are not applicable to a mere machine, but if it is regarded as a mechanism which is controlled and directed for a definite purpose, its action falls within the moral sphere and is to be judged like other departments of human conduct; but it is difficult to find a criterion by which the action of the State can be properly judged.

I. It seems obvious at first sight that we can fall back on Utilitarianism, and say that that is good which has results which are favourable to the greatest number and appreciated by them. This is apparently, at all events, a method of gauging good and bad government which seems appropriate to democracy; but after all, society is so complex that this mode of judging governments can hardly be applied. The welfare of Humanity in an unknown future is a matter of expectation that varies with temperament. In order to discuss with any precision the elements and proportions that will compose it, we must have in view a mass of individual

feeling in a definite time. The results of governmental action, which appear beneficial at first, may prove to be deleterious in the long run, as was the case with the allowances which were made in addition to wages in 1793; these doubtless effected extraordinary relief at first, at the cost of great demoralisation in the long run. It is still more difficult to treat the whole community as a body which is capable of feeling or giving expression to the sense of pleasure or pain; there was indeed a thrill of satisfaction that went through the whole country when it was announced that Crippen had been arrested, and that the sovereignty of the law had been able to establish itself. But for the most part there is dumb unconscious suffering or satisfaction, which cannot be traced directly to any governmental action. It appears that Utilitarianism can hardly take account of the country as a whole, but has to be satisfied with attempting to estimate the aggregate of the welfare of individuals. It endeavours to reckon up the utilities and disutilities which fall to the lot of particular citizens, and to estimate the good or evil to the country as a whole by giving the algebraical sum of these personal utilities and disutilities. Professor Pigou¹ attempts to give a means of measuring the relative good and evil of certain changes to particular citizens, as a help to the magistrate to estimate what is beneficial to the community

¹ *Wealth and Welfare*, pp. 24, 401. See also Cunningham, *Christianity and Economic Science*, p. 91.

as a whole. We cannot reach a solution of the problem as to good or evil in the community, so long as we are content with a merely quantitative estimate; we need to have a qualitative distinction between the kinds of satisfaction, or we may be forced to consider that, in spite of the results of material progress in giving increased command over nature, the noble savage of the primitive tribe leads a life which is as desirable as that of the man in the civilised State, since each of them receives a quantity of the satisfaction he appreciates.

2. There is a further difficulty in judging of the conduct of the State, since the criteria which we apply to the conduct of individuals are inapplicable to the conduct of States. Public duties are often distinct from private duties, and they involve action that in private individuals would be wrong. All tax collecting is a compulsory demand from the private individual for part of his property to be spent in ways on which he has often not directly been consulted, and of which very likely he may not wholly approve. The private individual who attempted to deprive his neighbour of goods in this fashion would be a mere robber. It is the fact that a public purpose is involved, and that he is a public official, which justifies the tax-gatherer in his persistence. Similarly the judge who condemns a criminal, and for example exacts a life for a life, would not be justified as a private individual in taking vindictive measures on his own account. Just be-

cause he is a public authority he is right in doing what would be wrong in a private individual. It is a token of the success of public authority that it does away with the private vengeance of the vendetta or of lynch law. In a similar way, the duties of the soldier in war may involve all sorts of actions that would be wrong for the individual, under any provocation whatever, and yet under public authority it is his duty not to flinch from them. There has been a tendency from Anabaptist times onwards to treat the principles which are enjoined on the Christian personally, in order that he may fit himself better for citizenship in a spiritual kingdom, as if they were a code of political maxims¹ for earthly and secular realms, by which the public action of communities and public officials should be judged. But it is from the very nature of the case impossible to apply or carry out this principle.

II. THE STATE AS A MORAL PERSONALITY

3. The difficulty of finding a criterion, apart from the State, by which to judge of the good or bad of its conduct, is avoided by Rousseau, who regards the State, as "Nothing but a moral person, "the life of which consists in the union of its "members²." The State is a sort of super-man

¹ On popular misinterpretation of the Sermon on the Mount see Appendix II below, also Cunningham, *Christianity and Social Questions*, p. 208.

² *Social Contract*, p. 125.

formed by the social contract, in which each individual "puts in common his person and his whole "power under the supreme direction of the general "will¹." The act of association "produces a moral "and collective body, which is composed of as many "members as the assembly has voices, and which "receives from this same act its unity, its common "self, its life and its will²." The State, according to Hobbes, was a Leviathan which stood over against the pigmies combined in it; according to Locke, it is a condition which guarantees freedom of personal action to the people whose property it protects; but against such views Rousseau protests. Our publicists, he says, "make the sovereign a fantastic being formed of connected parts; it is as if "they composed a man of several bodies, one with "eyes, another with arms, another with feet and "nothing else. The Japanese conjurers, it is said, "cut up a child before the eyes of the spectators; "then throwing all its limbs into the air, they make "the child come down again, alive and whole. Such "almost are the jugglers' tricks of our publicists; "after dismembering the social body by a deception "worthy of the fair, they recombine its parts no-body knows how³." According to Rousseau the State comes into being by a social contract, and continues to act as the general will of those who have formed themselves into a State. The general will,

¹ *Social Contract*, p. 110.

² *Ibid.* p. 110.

³ *Ibid.* p. 121.

as he conceives it, is a perfectly disinterested reason dealing with the affairs of the community. And it has coercive power; "As nature gives every man an "absolute power over all his limbs, the social pact "gives the body an absolute power over all its "members, and it is the same power which when "directed by the general will bears the name of "sovereignty¹."

4. Rousseau commits himself to the opinion "that the general will is always right and "always tends to the public advantage²"; but it is not clear whether he is referring to ideal conditions or to actual life. He probably means little more than the old maxim that "the king can do no "wrong"; and that in following the general will, every possible effort is made to escape the known causes of corruption in private interest, and that there is no principle to which appeal can be made to criticise the general will or to guard it from error. According to Kant's principle there is no external criticism to which we can appeal. The good will is the very ideal of the good. But it need not be supposed that the general will of the people is ever absolutely good; it is subject to human limitations; it is relative to the circumstances and conditions of the people; there is no absolute good but God.

(A) Rousseau, by recognising on the one hand the great difficulty of obtaining the undoubted de-

¹ *Social Contract*, p. 125.

² *Ibid.* p. 123.

cision of the general will¹ and on the other the possibility of the public being deceived, gives no excuse for regarding any actual State as absolute, and possessing an immunity from error. The power and prestige of the Roman Empire were so extraordinary, that there need be no surprise at the worship of the Emperor; but there is little excuse for the pretension of any modern State to be supreme over all human affairs.

(B) Though there is no definite criterion in words by which its excellences or its foibles can be gauged, the sovereign State is by no means irresponsible, and is susceptible of improvement. Sovereignty must always be exercised through a government, and this is certainly liable to err. The most important indication of its success or failure is found in the character of the citizens who grow up under its protection, and in the fulness of the personal life which they enjoy. There is room for comparison with other States, and for learning from them as to the various elements of Common Weal, for which provision should be made, and as to the best means of promoting them; and there can be

¹ Rousseau apparently condemned any system of representation and considered that the ideal method of attaining a knowledge of the general will could only be put into effect in city States when the whole body of the people could gather together in one assembly, and that an unanimous vote of the people thus assembled gave clear expression to the general will (*Social Contract*, p. 186). He greatly admired the institutions of Geneva.

no more hopeful sign of any State than that it is willing and able to learn from its own failures. It was the final condemnation of the Stuart monarchy that the kings showed so little ability to profit by their mistakes.

5. The parliamentary government which succeeded it, has also been on its trial. At the Revolution of 1689 Parliament was accepted as the organ through which sovereignty should be exercised, and the system of representative government appeared to offer great advantages for detecting the general will and for promoting it. But as time passed, this parliamentary government came itself to be questioned; it failed to maintain its hold in ordering the affairs of the American colonies in the eighteenth century, and it came to be more and more discredited in Great Britain itself in the nineteenth century.

(A) Parliament which had claimed, at the Revolution of 1689, to be an adequate expression of the general will of the community, had little pretension to retain this character in the nineteenth century¹. There were large classes who were unrepresented in the House of Commons; and who, since they had no part of their own in the government, were not in any sense self-governed, but lived under coercion. They came more and more, especially with the spread of education, to demand that they should have opportunities of self-government. It was of

¹ G. L. Dickinson, *Development of Parliament*, p. 132.

course possible to represent one class or another as supremely important, the interests of that class as practically typical of the Common Weal, and its decisions as representative of the general will. In the early eighteenth century the main taxation of the country fell on the landed classes, and it could be rightly contended that the existence of resources for promoting national power were bound up with the prosperity of the landed interest. At a later time, when the Common Weal was transferred from the solid basis of land to the shifting basis of trade¹, it was possible to contend that the interests of the capitalist classes were so bound up with the progress of the Common Weal that they ought to be dominant in the government of the realm. But towards the end of the nineteenth century, it became obvious that neither the representation of the landed interest, nor of the monied classes, gave adequate expression to the general will. Parliamentary institutions were disparaged; and there was an occasional demand for a decision by the people themselves, apart from representation altogether; and the referendum was occasionally spoken of as likely to give a better expression than Parliament could do of the general will.

(B) Mr Asquith is a thorough believer in parliamentary government², and he was opposed to any

¹ Massie, *Plan* quoted in *Growth of English Industry in Modern Times*, p. 578.

² Just as James II had been in personal sovereignty.

movement which tended to go beyond it or set it aside. The crisis came with the conduct of the war, and the power of expressing popular opinion which was afforded by the press. The change, by which Mr Asquith was obliged to relinquish office, was accomplished without parliamentary intervention. The people demanded a more vigorous prosecution of the war, and had confidence in Mr Lloyd George to do his best to conduct it on these lines. They were ready to supply large sums of money in a war loan; and thus a revolution, from parliamentary to popular government, was almost insensibly carried through.

III. CAUSES OF DEFECT IN GOVERNMENT

6. Those who pin their faith to parliamentary government are naturally very suspicious of this new departure; it certainly seems most important that there should be some clear idea of the meaning of good government, so that we may be clearly aware of the aims which are put before us, and of the extent to which we fall short of these aims as well as of the best means of correcting these errors. The carrying out the Common Weal is good government,—the giving effect to the general will; this might seem to be a mere truism, but it may be a practical safeguard in so far as it helps us to detect bad government. Bad government arises from carelessness about the Common Weal; or from readiness to put secondary and private interests

before the Common Weal; or worst of all, from readiness to divert the power of the State away from fostering the Common Weal to the promotion of private interest instead; this is a special temptation when these interests are widespread and powerful.

We are accustomed in England to be proud of the high tone of our public men, to think that the men who govern the country are devoted to the good of the community, and give their energy and their time unstintedly to promote it; it seems to me to be to a very large extent true, that there are in public life of every kind, municipal, county, and parliamentary, men who are really public spirited, and are doing their best for the community without desire to make personal gain out of their position. But it must be admitted that this quality of English public life is not so universal as could be wished, and that our neighbours do not recognise that public spirit is dominant among our public men. There is a political club in London, where foreign publicists are very welcome; the impressions which they form are by no means so favourable as we could desire. An Austrian, who had been in London for a couple of years, and whose impressions of England were chiefly formed at that political club, tells of the friends who had entertained him there, that "all they care for is to find positions for themselves and their relations, easy jobs. You may be sure that not many of them are to be found in the trenches, they are worse than the Jews, and

"they have no more patriotism than the Gypsies¹." Such a lack of public spirit among public men is a real danger to the good government of the country.

This disparagement of our public men is not confined to foreigners. It is at least an element in the contempt for politics and politicians which is so often openly expressed by soldiers and practical men; they seem to regard members of parliament as mere talkers who are playing for their own hand, and not really doing their best for the country as a whole. Nor can this be treated as entirely a recent development. Walpole said of his opponents; "Every one of them has his price"; and it might probably have been said with equal truth of his friends.

7. Partisanship is a similar mischief which endangers the political life of the United States; the enthusiasm which should be directed to the Common Weal is apt to be dissipated in mere party spirit. The parties consist, at their core, of men who hope to obtain office or the rewards of office, and who are successful in rallying round them a body of supporters; but this partisanship is in danger of eating into the national concern for the Common Weal². The sovereign State is a strong and efficient instrument for carrying out the general will, when it has come to a decision; but every assertion of self-interest, in disregard of the general

¹ *Morning Post*, 13 Feb. 1915, p. 6.

² Ostrogorsky, *Democracy*, p. 76.

will, weakens the State and may possibly paralyse its action.

8. Worse still is any deliberate attempt to make the State subservient to private ends; it is the very definition of the bad citizen that he consciously aims at so doing, and at exploiting the State in his own interest; when combined, bad citizens may have a great power of pursuing this course, and they are sometimes encouraged to pursue it by those who ought to know better. The working classes are a large majority of the country and it is natural for them to suppose that the increased comfort of the working classes must always be for the good of the community as a whole; but at all events even if it is for the good of the community in the present, it is not necessarily for the good of the community in the long run. It is possible to sacrifice posterity to the present generation¹. Important as it is that the masses of the people should enjoy a far larger share than they do of the comforts and conveniences of life, it is also important that the future of the country should not be sacrificed to the welfare of the present generation.

¹ Professor Pigou has apparently approved this one-sided view from the standpoint of an economic expert, and writes as if the increased consumption of the working classes necessarily gave increased demand for labour, and opportunities of employment: at all events he has been at no pains to guard against this interpretation of his opinion when it was definitely put to him. *Times*, May 13, 1914, 9 e, and May 16, 9 e; see also May 18, 9 e.

The criterion of good and bad government, which was generally recognised under a monarchy, holds good still. The king was worthy of his position if he was mainly concerned with the Common Weal, and was willing to sacrifice his own private gain for it, and to find his success as monarch in the prosperity of his people. The democratic citizen has no right to judge himself by a different standard, and unless he is endeavouring, in discharging his political responsibilities whatever they may be, to think first and foremost of the public good and to leave his private interests in the background, he is unfit to be trusted with the responsibilities of a citizen in a self-governing nation¹.

9. A grave difference of opinion appears in the views that are commonly taken as to the punishment which ought to be inflicted on political offenders, but there is a general feeling that so long as the safety of society is secured this should be comparatively light. The exercise of mercy is one of the powers of sovereignty, and a prudent government will desire to avoid any appearance of vindictiveness in their treatment of political offenders; there are many good reasons for clemency so long as it is not interpreted as a sign of weakness. But a distinction must be drawn. There are many political offenders who can be credited with a genuine desire to promote the Common Weal in some particulars or, even if they fail in their designs, they may

¹ See above, p. 22, and below, p. 75.

claim to be regarded as men who engaged in mistaken efforts to promote the Common Weal, and plead this excuse in mitigation of their punishment.

But this excuse cannot be urged by offenders who not only attack government but show themselves indifferent to the Common Weal. If Miss Sylvia Pankhurst is rightly reported she professes to be ready to go to any lengths in the war against society until woman's suffrage shall be obtained. Still more striking is the case of the Sinn Feiners. They do not appear to have any conception of a Common Weal at all; they have refused to take part in a convention which is to consider the possibilities of subordinating racial antagonisms to the promotion of a Common Weal for all parts of Ireland; and they frankly disavow any regard for the Common Weal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. They appear to be merely influenced by racial aspiration, and to be as ready now, as Celts were at the time of the Revolution, to intrigue with the enemies of Great Britain, during a time of war. When there is no thought of a Common Weal, but only a desire to use every opportunity to extort concessions to racial sentiment, there is no real claim to clemency. Whatever may be said of offences against government, disregard of the Common Weal and attacks on sovereignty may rightly be treated as high treason.

V

THE SENSE OF CITIZENSHIP

I. CONFLICTING VIEWS OF PUBLIC GOOD

I. It is comparatively easy to distinguish between the general will for the Common Weal and the pressure of particular interests, when we are considering organised parties; for such parties state their programme and the arguments on which they depend for urging that it shall be adopted. The persistent advocates of neutrality at the outbreak of the war showed clearly that they had little regard for what Mr Asquith described as the honour of the country, or for the maintenance of good faith between nations; and that they concentrated attention on sordid considerations and the possibilities of profiteering while other nations were at war¹. But there is very much greater difficulty in drawing a line in regard to individual citizens, and there is no evidence to enable us to pronounce upon their conduct with any certainty. The citizen participates in the life of the nation, and is concerned for the Common Weal; but he has also a personal life of his own. His own personal aims and interests may accord with the Common Weal as he conceives it, or they

¹ *Daily News*, 3rd August, 1914.

may be consciously divergent from the course which is best for the country as a whole, and from the general will. It is his duty, as a citizen, to bring his own conduct into accord with the Common Weal, as considered impersonally, whatever his private interests may be. As far as the honesty of individuals goes we always ought to give them the benefit of the doubt, and to try to believe that, even when they advocate a policy which favours their own personal interests, they are not conscious of any antagonism between their private interests and the good of the community as they conceive it. There doubtless are many men in England who are really convinced that it is for the good of the community in the long run to obtain large supplies of food from abroad, and that to rely on stimulating food production at home even temporarily would be a mistake. This opinion as to the good of the country is quite likely to harmonize with the interest of some one who is a ship owner; he may honestly regard it as desirable that this policy should be steadily maintained and that there should be every encouragement for shippers to bring food to this country, and that not even a temporary breach in our reliance on foreign supplies should be permitted. The public spirited man has no reason to refrain from supporting a course which he believes is right on public grounds, even though it is also a course which is favourable to the interests of his class. The statesman can afford to disregard illnatured criticism, but

there is a constant tendency among the rank and file of political parties to indulge in it.

2. There are at the present time two conflicting views as to the good of the country, on which public opinion is much divided. However strongly we may hold to the cosmopolitan or to the national doctrine, we cannot but recognise that much may be said for either view, and that many people have gradually come to change their opinions, or found it very difficult to decide between the two policies. We may distinguish the cosmopolitan view, as that of those who think that the country would attain its greatest good by sinking much of its national consciousness in a larger whole, and by aiming directly at promoting the welfare of humanity at large: on its economic side, this leads to the advocacy of Free Trade, as a policy in which the interest of this country is believed to coincide with that of the world as a whole. In an island realm which has devoted itself to commerce, this cosmopolitan view is likely to find favour, but there are other sides of economic life as well; we may not be wise to devote ourselves to commerce exclusively; we should consider what is unseen by the superficial observer—the possibilities of waste of the resources of the country in derelict farms, and of waste in the unemployment of our people. A national¹

¹ Wordsworth was enthusiastic for nationalism. Dicey, *Statesmanship of Wordsworth*, p. 80. See also Appendix I below.

rather than a cosmopolitan economic policy has much to say for itself; but cosmopolitanism and neglect of their own country appeal to many who are keenly alive to humanitarian sentiment, and are readily accepted by any who regard the national Common Weal as a merely negative influence.

Those who are enthusiastic for the constant consideration of the Common Weal of the nation will not admit that they take less thought than others for the good of humanity or concentrate attention on material resources; their difference with cosmopolitans is not as to the ultimate aim, but only as to the best methods of pursuing it; they will contend that cosmopolitanism and internationalism are different methods of working towards the same ultimate end and that they recommend the more practical course, since the good of mankind will certainly be attained by the conscious pursuit of the Common Weal, moral as well as material, in each nation. The love of humanity is apt to be a vague aspiration which does not call forth vigorous action; it is too far away for the ordinary man, who is ready to try to "do the duty that lies nearest him," to take it seriously into account; the means by which the good of the world may be directly attained are ineffective, like the "concert of Europe," for want of coercive powers. The practical man is apt to condemn the cosmopolitan as a mere sentimentalist, and to lay stress on the source of the progress that has already been made in the world. It is when any single nation

has set an example of rising to a better ideal of public duty, and has brought its influence to bear on other races and nations that a step in improvement has been made. The advocacy of freedom for the slave made little progress so long as it was argued on humanitarian grounds by Fox and other Quakers; but when it was at last brought within the range of practical politics by one nation, and taken up as a national concern, an example was provided which other peoples have gradually followed.

3. In view of these conflicting opinions, as to the nature of the public good for the country at this time, there is special need to be careful in the personal judgments we allow ourselves to make. Thirteen years ago many Free Traders seemed ready to assume, that those who were dissatisfied with the cosmopolitan ideal were entirely devoid of any care for the public good, and were thinking only of their private interests¹. As a matter of fact, tariff reformers were then advocating a course which they believed to be directly for the Common Weal of the nation and the Empire, and incidentally for that of the world at large. To ignore this claim and assert that they were insensible to public good altogether, and only thinking of their private interests, was not very generous. During the stress of the great emergency caused by the war, the practical importance of attention to the Common Weal of the nation has been increasingly realised, and public opinion has

¹ *Guardian*, 23rd November, 1904, p. 1966.

veered to the national, and against the cosmopolitan policy. But it is to be hoped that in this matter at least there will be no reprisals, and that political discussion may not be degraded by accusations of self-interested conduct on the part of statesmen. Such charges are entirely gratuitous, since no one can tell for certain what the motives of another are; he may guess, but he can never know whether a man's political action is impersonal or interested. To bring accusations which cannot be proved is always irritating, but never persuasive. The Hon. Bertrand Russell may insist that those who believed in August, 1914, that there was an obligation to go to war, were carried away by vindictive feeling and evil passions; but men, who are conscious of their own righteous indignation over the wrongs of Belgium, will not readily believe that he knows best as to their motives. They will only think that even a great mathematician may be deficient in insight as to character, and may be unscrupulous in spreading injurious statements of the truth of which he is uncertain.

II. CLAIMS ON THE CITIZEN

4. It is abundantly clear that the sovereign State will be strong and effective when the citizens are ready to subordinate their private interests and to fall in with the general will for the common good. The State is a vigorous personality when it is prompt in coming to a decision, and able

to put it into immediate effect. Germany has given an illustration of these qualities during the present war; she has shown herself much better equipped for any undertaking than the nations to which she is opposed; her organisation was habitual, and the citizens were ready to sacrifice their private convenience at once, and respond to the claims made upon them by the State. Her initial successes were due to this promptitude in decision and action, and to the long preparation which had been made for striking the blow determined upon. But this promptitude in expressing and following the general will, though exhibited so clearly in war, is equally important for a nation at peace. All the elements of human welfare of which the modern State is accustomed to take account,—whether it be the putting down of insanitary conditions, the protecting of the country economically from being exploited, or anything else which affects the good of the citizen,—will be better dealt with by the general will, when citizens conform readily to the general will, and are keenly alive to the importance of giving effect to its decisions in regard to the Common Weal, promptly and efficiently, through appropriate organs.

The power and efficiency of the sovereign State are elements in the Common Weal of all the citizens, and the State may rightly claim that there is an obligation on the part of the individual citizens to promote it. This was strongly urged by Hegel, whose doctrine was greatly affected by the condi-

tion of Germany¹ and especially of Würtemberg² in his time. The State, as self-conscious reason and will, exists for its own sake; and in the State, freedom asserts itself most truly. He was in earnest with the thought of the State as a moral personality through which God's will is realised³, and which has the strongest claims on individuals, so⁴ that "it is "their highest duty to participate in the life of "the State." In the case of any State this would include the obligation to pay taxes, and to assist in the defence of the nation, but in the case of a democratic country the State can rightly claim far more from the individual citizen. Through the existence of the State, citizens attain to a true personality themselves⁵, they have the privilege of voting and of taking a part in the direction of public affairs, and it is incumbent on them that they should exercise these privileges and fit themselves to discharge them rightly.

5. Those who are conscious of these obligations, and are anxious as good citizens to fulfil them, may find that the demands made upon them personally are onerous. The duty to assist the police,

¹ C. E. Merriam, *History of the Theory of Sovereignty since Rousseau*, pp. 90 and 91.

² Bluntschli, *Geschichte des allgem. Staatsrechts*, I, p. 548. On his sympathetic attitude towards Prussian officialism, see *Ibid.* I, p. 552.

³ "Es ist der Gang Gottes in der Welt das der Staat ist," Hegel, *Phil. d. Rechts*, § 258, p. 313.

⁴ Hegel, *op. cit.* § 258, p. 306. ⁵ Hegel, *op. cit.* § 71.

by being ready to give evidence which will help them in the arrest of evil-doers and the punishment of crime, may involve risk and danger; any one may be called on to take a subordinate part in the administration of the law; while in this country there have always been men of leisure who have been willing to devote much of their time to public affairs. The mass of the citizens form the ultimate authority in all matters of legislation: in regard to some of these the citizen may feel that he has personal knowledge and a genuine opinion of his own; in regard to many questions, on the other hand, it is impossible that he should have more than secondhand knowledge; but it is incumbent upon him to do his best for the Common Weal on the issues that come before him, and not to give his vote carelessly and blindly.

6. There is an enormous number of topics on which the citizen may be appealed to and on which he may be called to make up his mind. The range has been enlarged, partly by the progress of science which has rendered it possible to prevent the spread of diseases and to give favourable conditions for health, but far more through the action of public-spirited individuals. In many directions the experiments which were made by philanthropic individuals, have been taken up and incorporated among the activities of the State. The hospitals, which were promoted throughout the country in the reign of George II, have called attention to the amount which can be publicly done for the health

of the people. The example set by Dr William Hawes and the founders of the Royal Humane Society has brought about additional care for the preservation of human life. The example of mill-owners, like Sir Robert Peel and Robert Owen, has led to the first Factory Acts and the organisation of factory inspectors; and the work of Florence Nightingale was remarkable, not only for what she did personally, but for the impulse she gave to the care of the sick. Besides new public undertakings there has been much accomplished on the lines suggested by the work of reformers, like John Howard, in prison discipline and in the treatment of the insane.

England has not been altogether unmindful of her responsibilities for the welfare of the planters in overseas dominions during the first era of colonisation. Much trouble was taken in regard to the religious conditions of the settlers in the West Indies and in Virginia, and the story of Pocahontas serves at least to show that there was, in high quarters, an interest in exercising a beneficial influence on the native population. Such attempts were less welcome in the New England colonies, and were not forced by the Mother Country on the settlers there; and after the Restoration and Revolution, the government ceased to show any great sense of responsibility for the welfare of the colonists, but officially left them to themselves. There were many men, however, who felt that the responsibility of the Mother Country, though officially dis-

carded, still remained as a duty to be done; voluntary institutions were organised by individuals, which attempted to occupy the ground abandoned by the State. The names of Dr Bray and Bishop Berkeley are specially noticeable in this connection, and at a later era there was an immense development of philanthropic feeling in regard to the slave trade, and to slavery; as well as a new sense of our responsibilities for the Indian Empire; this was partly religious in character and partly due to the feeling which was roused by Burke's impeachment of Warren Hastings. Since that time, the duty of the British Empire to the native races, and to the colonists, has been much more definitely felt; and there has been the conscious aim to provide an aegis in British rule, under which self-government might be developed in colonies, or districts, or municipalities. Self-denying examples have had an extraordinary force in increasing the scope of public activity at home; and there has been a similar effort to consider the duty of a civilised race towards non-civilised and half-civilised peoples, on the part of individuals abroad; this has been embodied in the tradition of the Indian Civil Service and overseas administration. The more the scope and the success of this general will for the Common Weal is kept in view, the more the exercise of the power and influence of the realm at home and abroad is likely to improve. The effort to exploit the overseas dominions economically, in the in-

terests of the Mother Country, has absolutely ceased; and there has been an honest attempt to promote self-government, wherever it seemed that the necessary conditions existed, and that there was any real sense of a Common Weal.

III. THE COMMON WEAL AS A POSITIVE AIM

7. Rousseau's conception of the State, as having a real life and a real personality expressed by a general will, may at least help us to set political problems in the terms in which they can be dealt with most clearly. The sovereign State has a national life, and is a personality in which individuals participate, in so far as they throw themselves heartily and personally into the Common Weal. The democratic citizen ought not to be satisfied with a standard of his duty in public affairs that is lower than that laid down for themselves by Stuart Kings¹; but there is a serious danger lest when the responsibility of rule is divided among so many citizens none of them should take his share of it very seriously. As Burke says, "All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great Master, Author and Founder of society². This principle

¹ See above, p. 22, and p. 62.

² This principle is more fully insisted upon, Cunningham, *British Citizens and their responsibility to God*, p. 23.

"ought even to be more strongly impressed upon the minds of those who compose the collective sovereignty, than upon those of single princes¹." It is by keeping this ideal for themselves personally before them and trying to live up to it that the citizens can help to keep the life of the State at its best and to do something to improve it in character. The citizen has not only the opportunity of taking his part in legislating for the whole, but of personally endeavouring to bring his own energies and activities into accordance with the Common Weal and so to serve the State. It is thus that his life may become socialised, and that, as Hegel teaches, he may find in the institutions of society a safeguard for his own personal freedom. "No one can have a right but as a member of a society and of a society in which some common good is recognised by members as their own ideal good...." Personality "is the capacity of being determined by the conception of his own ideal good²." There may often be a struggle in the mind of the citizen as to the course he shall take or the extent to which he shall control his personal self-seeking, and if he is to play his part rightly, there must be the recognition of a "will with which one's everyday self may be at odds as nevertheless one's truer and fuller self³."

¹ Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in *Works*, I, p. 416.

² T. H. Green, *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 44.

³ Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 101.

When once the State is conceived as a moral person it is comparatively easy to indicate the line which should be pursued in order that the character of the State may be wisely developed.

8. (A) The State, as a person, should aim at being a good neighbour to other States, and those who control its activities should see that this is carefully kept in view. A man is not a good neighbour who is constantly interfering in the affairs of other people, and thinks he can manage their dressing, their feeding, and the upbringing of their children better than they can themselves; even if he is right there is a danger that he may be offensive, and do more harm than good. On the other hand the doctrine of non-intervention may be carried too far; there are cases where the violence of the husband, or the cruelty of parents, calls for the interference of neighbours to protect the weak; and it is to the discredit of neighbours if they are indifferent to these things altogether. In a similar fashion it is discreditable to a great nation, which has the power to prevent the continuance of anarchy and disorder in another territory, if it scrupulously holds its hand and leaves the neighbouring country to work out its own salvation. In neither case can a definite rule be laid down; but the general will of a nation may decide that it is a duty to use its influence to promote the triumph of law and order. The general will of the United States came to the decision that there was a call for their country to

interfere in the case of Cuba and the Philippines, though it has come to no similar decision in regard to Mexico.

(B) It is also the part of the State, as a moral person, to be a good parent, and to see that its activities are so carried on, that posterity thrives better in body and mind. The general will has difficulty in coming to a decision as to the promoting of good. There is at times a fear that the conferring of a benefit by the State may weaken the individual character, as in the case of old age pensions; but there is a much more definite opinion and ready expression of the general will, in regard to the putting down of injurious conditions. The pains that are taken, in regard to the conditions of work in factories and mines, to the water supply and the conditions of housing, are abundant evidence as to the readiness of the general will to put down evils, when they are clearly recognised as evils which it is practicable to meet.

There is, however, a serious difficulty where the public mind is not made up. There is a general consensus of opinion that over-indulgence in alcohol is very prevalent and that this is the cause of much suffering and crime; but there is no general agreement that alcohol is in itself an evil, and that all indulgence in it should be put down, nor even as to the best means of permitting its use while guarding against its abuse. So long as there is such difference of opinion on the subject, and while there is no

general will, legislation must be experimental; or there is a danger that it may become futile through the impossibility of enforcing it. On this account the State can much more easily use its coercive power to put down evils, than to promote what many regard as good.

In the general will we may recognise an instrument which gives the greatest efficiency and influence to the State as a whole, and it also affords the opportunity for the fullest development of the individual personally. It is by coming into conscious accord with the general will that the citizen attains the greatest measure of freedom from coercion. In so far as he is self-disciplined, there is no occasion to coerce him from without. The more he respects the law, which is the expression of the general will, the less occasion there is for the exercise of coercion in the interests of the Common Weal. The more ready he is to consider the Common Weal primarily, and to lay aside his own interests in so far as they conflict with the Common Weal, the less occasion does he give for legislation or compulsion. Liberty is to be prized because it gives a man personal freedom from external compulsion, and it is a necessary condition for the full development of the exercise of self-discipline.

VI

PERSONAL CHARACTER

I. THE LIFE OF THE STATE AND OF THE CITIZEN PERSONALLY

I. It may be worth while to indicate the point we have reached. We have seen that readiness on the part of the citizens to promote the Common Weal, is the chief condition of vigour and efficiency in the life of the State; while, on the other hand, it is also the condition under which the individual may enjoy the full personal life of the good citizen. It reconciles the two elements of Common Weal,—the efficiency of the State as a whole, and the fulness of personal life,—and it shows how they may both be promoted and cultivated together in a dual life.

But it must be remembered that political life may improve or may deteriorate; there has been the rise or the fall of States; there have been citizens with an honest pride in their privileges, and there have been citizens who were indifferent to the claims of their country. How are we to try to see that the trend of the movement in our day shall be in the right direction, and to promote and cultivate it, so as to secure the progress of the community?

2. The life of the State, and the life of the persons who compose it, influence one another; there is, as one might say, action and re-action. The State can do much to form the individual life, to provide ideals, and to waken responsibilities; and on the other hand a corrupt State encourages the citizen to be careless and indifferent in regard to public affairs. But though they influence one another, the initiative lies with the individual: we have already seen how the action of philanthropic individuals has led to the extension of the activities of State. And hence we may note that, as Mr Roosevelt has so often insisted, personal character is of supreme importance as the chief factor in the regeneration of the community. It is important that we should to-day consider the influences which may be brought to bear, for the improvement of the character of the citizens, and for the cultivation of good citizenship.

II. THE INFLUENCE OF THE STATE ON PERSONAL CHARACTER

3. The State cannot of course actually promote the personal moral life: the initiative must lie with the individual, and it is impossible to make men moral by act of parliament¹. But the State can afford opportunities which facilitate the duteous action of the individual and render it easier

¹ T. H. Green, *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 37.

for him to take account of the Common Weal, and to fall in personally with the general will. Personal interests, which are detrimental to the life of the State, are always near and pressing; it is important that the citizen should be aided to take account of the Common Weal, by having a conception put before him of some step that is practicable and within reach, and therefore worth struggling for.

4. The idealist who paints a fancy picture of a social Utopia may not be useful practically; to some temperaments his picture will merely be an incitement to censorious criticism of all existing institutions and powers, while other people may be depressed at the impracticability of realising this ideal, and be inclined to despair of the possibility of any improvement. Here the work of the statesman comes in, to shape a relative improvement that is practicable, and that is, therefore, worth aiming at. Better provision for old age, better housing, better conditions of employment, are all spheres in which a relative improvement is possible. They are all matters in which steps may be taken by public spirited individuals¹ towards improving the Common Weal; and it is the business of the statesman to mark out these successive steps towards the Common Weal, and to show how best they can be taken. Unless the ordinary citizen feels that there is some experiment that is worth trying, he is not

¹ See above, p. 72.

likely to be aroused from his absorption in the private interests that press on him nearly, and to be awakened to the duty of doing something towards the Common Weal. All may feel a sentimental desire that things should be improved, and all may be ready to join in forcing their neighbours to behave differently, so as to promote the Common Weal at the expense of other people; but it is the statesman who, by formulating a practicable step and showing that it is possible to take it, renders the citizens responsible for each doing what he can personally to bring about this particular improvement. Each citizen may then feel his responsibility in the decision, and it is here that the legitimate function of parties and of political associations comes in, since they can persuade him as to what can be done for the community as a whole; but unless the statesman puts forward a step towards the Common Weal clearly and definitely, the ordinary citizen is only too likely to disregard it altogether as no concern of his. It is when he realises the practicability of some improvement, that the sense of responsibility for promoting it is really roused; it is the same with regard to the influence on other peoples. There is a great deal of evil in the world, and most private persons feel that they can do little or nothing to prevent it, and that they are not responsible for it. But if the statesman can show that there is a practicable means by which the State can use its power to put down the exploiting of native races, or to check the

growth of anarchy in any country, the citizen may realise that he has a duty and a personal responsibility in seeing that that influence shall be exercised aright.

5. The State can also exercise a great influence on the personal character of the citizens through its power of controlling elementary education. This is not so much a matter of determining what subjects shall be taught, or what methods shall be used, as of laying down clearly the aims and objects of education, so that they may be apprehended by managers, inspectors, teachers and children alike.

(A) During the nineteenth century the aim of education was to a great extent individualistic,—to enable a boy to rise in the world, and do better for himself because of his schooling. We have heard much of the educational ladder by which boys might climb into another sphere of life: and undue attention is often given in the scholastic world to the rungs of this ladder—the scholarships and bursaries which are awarded to successful competitors. In England too much regard has been given to the development of the individual, and too much encouragement given for him to specialise according to his tastes and temperament, as if they were the supreme secular subject for consideration. The State ought to insist that the service of the community is held up as the supreme object for which the individual is to be trained: that the child must

learn to submit himself to discipline in order that he may be better able to take his place in the life of the community, and that his faculties are developed, not for his selfish interests, but in order that he may be able to give national service in the manner in which he can do it best.

(B) It will be a help in this direction if time is given in school to the holding up of patriotic examples; the past of the world is full of the stories of men who have devoted themselves to the Common Weal, and children are ready to appreciate romance and heroism. This is not merely a matter of book learning, but of such a use of local association, as may bring one or other of the great citizens of the past within the range of the child's personal interest. It is strange to pass from a country like ours, which is crowded with memorials of the past, and of the steps in progress, to a colony or to the United States in which historical associations are comparatively lacking. The State should take care that no chance should be lost of developing that sense of patriotism which is such an important aid to doing the duties of a citizen¹.

¹ J. G. Fichte by his *Reden an die deutsche Nation* had extraordinary success in awakening the national consciousness of Germany by academic discourses, pp. 12, 368.

III. POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PERSONAL CHARACTER

6. The current political science which lays so much stress on personal liberty has been readily accepted; it can be traced back from the Levellers through the new departure that was taken by Locke; it has had great influence on democratic communities, and has been put forward with all the attractive charm which such a writer as Mr Lowes Dickinson can exercise. But after all, Mr Oscar Browning and his pupils do not really go to the root of the matter; Political Science, as they treat it, is merely a collection of half truths, and gives but little help as a guide in practical affairs. We have already seen that it does not supply an adequate account of the origin of civil society. Where the liberty of each individual is taken for granted as an axiom, there can be no solution of any of the problems which arise from time to time, as to the grounds of coercion by the State, or the limits of toleration, or the nature of personal obligations to the community. Political Science has little or nothing to say about these questions, and they are all left to the opportunist to decide according to personal temperament. It appears too that current Political Science is somewhat of an anachronism; it remains on the eighteenth century plane of thought, and is satisfied to look at the State as a mechanism; it has not been influenced by Rousseau's conception

of the State as a moral personality, nor by Hegel's doctrine as to political obligation and the socialising of the individual life. It does however lay such stress on the individual life, and personal liberty, that we might expect it would have something to say upon the development of the individual personally, so that he may enjoy the fullest life of his own.

7. But here too we are disappointed.

(A) The 'individuity' is treated as absolute,—a thing on which there is to be no coercion from without, while he is to be free to live his own life. Government action is to be reduced to a minimum, and we find little guidance as to the means for the training and education of individuals, nor is any ideal set forward in accordance with which they might try to train themselves. The Common Weal is never accentuated by Political Science as the object towards which personal life should be directed, but it is merely a negative principle which can be appealed to in order to condemn encroachments on personal action.

(B) We have seen that Locke and others were indignant at being represented as the advocates of unrestrained liberty. But current Political Science seems to have made no advance in stating what the limits of personal liberty ought to be in civil society; it appears still to argue that everyone should be free to do as he likes. Since it does not specify any useful criterion of self-restraint, current Political Science appears to provide excuses for the

indulgence of every passion; it can be appealed to by the advocates of conduct which is generally regarded as immoral.

IV. THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY

8. There has been a tendency during the last two centuries to regard religion as something which may be neglected in politics. The cleavage has become very deep; the State no longer coerces individuals in regard to religious opinion, and in some countries, it avowedly treats the whole subject with indifference. From a political standpoint, the pretensions of the Church to give official guidance to the State have been discredited; it is, besides, a matter of common complaint that religion has done much in the past to foment causes of quarrel, and to divert the energies of mankind into warlike enterprises like the Crusades; while it is also said that the Church has failed to lay down principles of universal application in regard to the organisation of Society in time of peace¹. On the other hand, it is to be noticed from the religious side that a number of

¹ From primitive times till the eighteenth century the Church condemned usury, that is the taking of interest on capital which was fully secured, as immoral; and this view is maintained in the 109th Canon of 1604. When monetary conditions were greatly changed by the influx of silver from the New World, the ordinary conscience failed to be guided by the old ecclesiastical rules, as to the form of the bargain, and took advantage of the liberty given by the Statute of 1624. See Cunningham, *The Moral Witness of the Church on the Investment of Money*, p. 6.

those who are much occupied with religious observances, disclaim any interest in politics, and even profess to regard secular ambitions and activities of every kind as mere vanities. Philanthropists, who are in earnest about the miseries of our own day, feel little sympathy for men and women who seem to be given up to introspection and to be absorbed in anxiety about the saving of their own souls.

But a distinction, which is often forgotten, must be recalled. It is true that the student of human life must certainly break it up into sections, and analyse its different aspects, social and personal, artistic and scientific, so as to study each one apart. And in detail he must concentrate on one thing at a time so as to apprehend it thoroughly; still he should never forget in such enquiries that he is only dealing with a particular aspect after all, with the view of understanding it better. But on the other hand, when action comes into play, and especially when we are seeking to make the most of our own lives personally, we must try to treat human life, in all its complexity, as a whole, and not to ignore any of its sides. A man misses much of life who, in pursuing his ideal, whatever it may be, disregards health or social ties, or the material welfare that conduces to them, or his inheritance in the past. Man's nature is very complex, whether he is conscious of it or not; this 'individuality' has relations to the material world, and to his fellow men and to God; and he cannot make the most of his life personally unless

he tries to keep all these ties consciously in mind, so that none is left completely out of account. To make the most of life, he must have a personal ideal of the best he can hope to attain, and he must strive after it.

Whoever sets himself to realise his ideal of manhood, and to cultivate what he regards as the noblest human powers, must concentrate his energies on a definite aim, and will be eager to discard the vicious and the frivolous and the vulgar; he will try to assimilate the best of which he deems himself capable. If he wishes to keep himself constantly fit in body, he will at least avoid injurious excesses; and the man, who desires to form his tastes after the best models, will habituate himself to the thoughts and aspirations of the greatest writers the world has known. There must be self-discipline if there is to be any success in realising a personal ideal; and the nature of that discipline will be relative to the ideal we cherish.

It is of course possible for anyone to frame, and to frame deliberately, an ideal that is very one-sided, and is drawn entirely from some one aspect of human life. Such is the exaggerated care of the miser for the means of procuring worldly goods; an over-developed love of society easily passes into dissipation; and the fanatic or devotee may seek for union with God so eagerly, as to discard all earthly activities. Striving after personal self-development is always in danger of degenerating into self-seeking egoism. The best corrective to mistaken ideals, lies

in the conscious effort to frame an ideal for oneself personally, that shall take account of human life, in all its aspects and as a whole. In the Christian ideal this is aimed at; it is the ideal of the Christian man to form himself on a divine model¹. In the life of the Son of Man there was no conscious discarding of any aspect of human life. The ideal of manhood which Christianity sets before us has the closest affinities with every side of human nature; the aspirations of the Christian man are not limited by the tastes and interests that appeal to his own temperament; this ideal can never become so self-centred as to be anti-social. Anyone who claims to give his efforts exclusively to the cultivation of personal holiness, has not learned the character of the Son of Man aright. Citizenship in the kingdom of Heaven is the very essence of the Christian life; the social element is inherent, since the aspiration of the Christian has a bearing on all the activities of life; it is the ambition of the Christian man to form his own character after a divine personality, and to discard what is inconsistent with it.

The growth of human character involves, on the one side, the framing of a personal ideal, and on the other a singleness of purpose in pursuing it; here we may see the practical value of a personal ideal. An ideal for Society is vague and indefinite; we may paint fancy pictures of a new earth, but we can hardly take a step by ourselves in realising them, or in providing the peasant with a fowl in the pot;

¹ See below, Appendix II, § 4.

this lies beyond the scope of our action. But a personal ideal is a practical force. We are free to frame it for ourselves, in accordance with our own temperament and circumstances; and it lies with us each to do our best to bring our ideal to bear, on every occasion and at every opportunity, in our social and public as well as in our devout life. When the Christian man is privileged to be the citizen in a democratic State, it is incumbent on him to be a good citizen, and not merely to be guided by his own interests. Self-discipline has always been recognised as a Christian duty, and as essential for the training of a Christian soldier; the personal character at which the Christian is taught to aim, is also the personal character which is favourable to the maintenance and furtherance of the Common Weal.

It may be recognised that the Spiritual and Eternal exercise very little direct influence on the conduct of secular affairs in our day. In carrying on the government, in all its ramifications, public men have to give full attention to the precise conditions of time and place, and to analyse the differences between one community and another, so as to learn by secular experience. There is need for Empirical Science, to examine and adjust the mechanism of State in all its forms. But none the less a community that discards religion altogether does so at its peril. Indirectly, by exercising an influence on personal character, religion may be a powerful means of cultivating zeal for the Common Weal

among the citizens generally. By strengthening the sense of duty and responsibility in regard to the Common Weal, Christianity tends to develop the character of the citizen in a right direction; and it may be contended that any religion which fails to foster the citizen's sense of duty towards the Common Weal falls short of true Christianity, and does not produce the fruits which might have been looked for.

9. There has been, during the last few years, an extraordinary awakening of a sense of duty to the community. It was observable at the very beginning of the war among young men who were apparently leading lives of mere pleasure-seeking and seemed to have no other object in life than their own amusement; but they showed in the first weeks of the war that they had awakened to a sense of duty for doing their best in the national cause, and they have been ready to sacrifice their prospects and their lives at this crisis of their country's fate. They roused themselves nobly in the cause of patriotism; and gradually that call has been heard and responded to eagerly by the men and women of all classes of society and of the most various vocations. But there is a danger that the sense of duty, which has thus been awakened in a great crisis, should not be maintained when that crisis is over; that the return of peace should be regarded as a time to relax the strain, and to allow the careless self-seeking habit of life to reassert itself, and indifference to the Common Weal to be accepted as normal and

allowable. Religion claims that it can supply a foundation which will underpin and strengthen the newly awakened sense of duty. The religious man has been taught to think of the world as governed by God, of the ebb and flow of earthly empires and secular things as the sphere in which God is realising his purpose for mankind. The effort to realise the Common Weal may cease to be occasional, and become habitual to the man who is inspired, not merely by patriotism, but by the consciousness that he is in his little sphere a fellow-worker with God. Just as personality is rendered fuller and nobler when it is consciously merged in the desire to promote the Common Weal, so patriotism may be deepened and strengthened when it is consciously merged in the effort to realise the purpose of God.

IO. The citizen cannot but be much perplexed because of the number and complexity of the problems on which he is called to make up his mind. He may be appealed to in regard to 'Chinese Slavery,'—the advisability of permitting contracts for imported labour which extend over several years,—or in regard to 'reprisals,'—the advisability of creating panic in the civil population of Germany, as a means of preventing similar attacks on our own people. And those questions, which might be difficult enough in themselves, are rendered more obscure, because we must view them not only with regard to the present, but still more in their probable bearing on the future. The decisions are im-

mensely responsible, for so much is involved in them—the development of South Africa and the prospective relations of European nations with each other. It is not possible to rely on the intelligence of the ordinary man to apply natural reason¹ to such problems; and we cannot work them out on paper conclusively from any principle which we assume as absolute. There is always the double problem of improving conditions, and of improving men personally so that they may realise the most of these improved conditions. Human progress has not advanced by steady stages in the regular courses of a piece of masonry: time after time good has been brought out of evil, and men have risen “on their dead selves to higher things.” The citizen must endeavour to face each problem as it comes, and to realise the responsibility it involves, in order to avoid being led away by any unworthy considerations; he can then set himself to deal with it, dispassionately, in the right manner. The religious man may hope to do this, consciously and habitually, because he believes that, through the

¹ Calvin's doctrine that human reason, unlike the human will, was “partly weakened and partly corrupted” at the Fall leads him to regard the reason as a sufficient guide in regard to civil society. “Every individual understands how “human societies must be regulated by laws, and is also “able to comprehend the principles of those laws.” *Institutes*, II, ii, § 13. On the influence of this doctrine on political writers in the seventeenth century see Pease, *Leveller Movement*, p. 320.

maze of human affairs, "the will of God rides on in majesty"; and that there is a divine purpose which is slowly and surely working itself out, and in the realisation of which human beings can aid. He does not set himself to imagine the ultimate future of the race; for it is not clear that such knowledge, if he had it, would be a help to him to make up his mind as to the steps that will lead towards it; it is enough "to do the next thing" as best he can. "The distant scene I do not ask to see; one step enough for me." His habitual scheme of life is consonant with the right frame of mind for doing his political duties in the best way.

The really devout man may feel a confidence in the decision which is taken in this spirit. He believes that the Will which rules the world is not arbitrary and unintelligible, but that it is possible for the human mind to appreciate its working in part, and that by seeking after the friendship of God, and conscious companionship with God, he may so far enter into the mind of God, as in some degree to see things in the right proportion and estimate them at their true values, as God does. He cannot hope to see with God's eyes, but he may try, as it were, to see more nearly from God's point of view. It is thus that he may hope to be guided to a sound judgment in the practical issues which come before him, and to be saved from the disastrous mistakes and the errors of judgment from which even the most astute politicians are not free.

APPENDIX I

FREE TRADE ILLUSIONS¹

I. The recommendations of the Paris Conference of the Allies, in June, 1916, took a large part of the British public completely by surprise; they had been brought up to regard free intercourse in trade as an axiomatic principle, which it was foolish and almost wicked to call in question; and the proposal to set it aside seemed to be so *outré* as hardly to deserve consideration. Yet a few months of reflection and a little fresh experience have helped to set the matter in another light.

There are at any rate a number of people now, who are inclined to think that the alleged benefit of free commercial intercourse, as a necessary step to the increased recognition of the brotherhood of man, is illusory. There is no self-acting mechanism for the diffusion of the sense of human brotherhood; this must be a matter of conscious effort. That we can, by regulating conditions of trade, create the feelings we desire to foster, is a curious superstition; the mercantilists believed that by forcing the Colonies into a position of economic dependence on this country they would foster a sense of loyalty,—

¹ Some of the following paragraphs appeared in the *British Citizen*, March 17, 1917.

and they succeeded instead in diffusing a desire for American independence. Races, which differ in tradition and temperament, are not reconciled to one another by being brought into close relations, either in India or Ireland; the willingness of the Jew to lend money to the Gentile, and enter into trade relations, does not disarm anti-Semitism; and there is no ground for assuming that free intercourse between all nations would make for humanitarian sentiment. When closely looked at we see that this expectation is a mere superstition.

Equally illusory is the belief that free intercourse will mechanically bring about the economic good of the world as a whole, and of every part of it. The Paris recommendations are not necessarily mistaken, though they are inconsistent with the principle of free intercourse, which maintains that any interference must certainly be mischievous and bring about indirect evils which would more than counter-balance any gain that might be anticipated.

It was held by Cobdenites that in all cases of exchange both countries gain,—though both may not gain equally,—and that the more intercourse was promoted between nations, the better. This doctrine favoured the more advanced at the expense of the less advanced countries and has been rejected by undeveloped countries on economic grounds¹. Further, when we consider what has happened where free intercourse and free competition have

¹ Cunningham, *The Rise and Decline of Free Trade*, p. 87.

been tried, on a small scale, we shall feel that it is quite illusory to count on any certainty of benefit accruing from the general adoption of this system. A hundred years ago there were enthusiasts for free competition within the country; they held that free competition would give the enterprising man his chance, that it would be best for the nation as a whole, and that whatever temporary mischief might arise to particular classes or interests during the period of transition, every part of the community would gain in the long run. This was the opinion not only of the capitalists who were making profits, but of philanthropists like Dr Chalmers¹; they were enthusiastic believers in the beneficent action of free competition and the shortsightedness of those who interfered with it. But this thorough-going enthusiasm for free competition within the realm no longer prevails; there is a general agreement that it is for the welfare of the realm to maintain a "standard of life," and there is an insistent demand for an "equality of opportunity"; free competition and *laissez faire* do not satisfy these requirements. We no longer believe that the welfare of the nation as a whole can be mechanically brought about by free competition. When Free Traders assure us that the welfare of the world as a whole will come about mechanically by allowing free intercourse, there is a temptation to remind them that we have

¹ T. Chalmers, *Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns*, III, p. 37.

heard that sort of thing before, and that though it may be plausible it is not true.

2. The public, who are convinced that the reasoning on which they have relied hitherto, is misleading, are inclined to say that Economic Science is "true in theory but does not hold good in practice"; but this is at least a very crude way of stating the case. Political Economy has a double function; on the one hand it is a mental discipline¹ which trains the mind for discriminating and dealing with business problems, on the other it investigates economic phenomena, as they have actually occurred and are occurring. It might be pointed out that we group economic phenomena by themselves for our own convenience in studying them, and that there is no line which marks them out in actual life; but without pursuing this train of thought we may look at the matter as practical men, and try to distinguish the limits within which Economic Science is useful to us in our investigations from those in which it is not applicable, and where it becomes misleading if we try to rely on it.

Economic Science offers the best means at our disposal for investigating particular problems, or studying any group of economic phenomena so as to understand it better; but it is not applicable if we wish to describe the economic life of a community as a whole or to forecast its course. Such

¹ Cunningham, "A Plea for Pure Science" in *Economic Review*, II, p. 25 (January, 1892).

attempts lie beyond its true sphere, it has no pretension to be able to deal with them.

Human Society is so complex that in order to study particular phenomena in any detail, we need to isolate them: it is necessary for us to try to simplify the problems so that we may grasp them and deal with them. We need tools to work with in order to think clearly, and to measure accurately, and terms in which to state our conclusions. Unless we have some such means at our disposal we cannot set the problems of railway rates, or the incidence of taxation, or the advantages and disadvantages of trusts in a form in which they can be discussed clearly. Economic Science is necessary for us to use if we wish to pursue such studies.

But while it is necessary for us to group phenomena that we may study them better, we should never forget that the grouping is made for our own convenience, and that we cannot really break life up into sections. Economic phenomena do not actually exist apart and by themselves, though we may find it convenient to think of them by themselves. As they actually occur in our experience, economic phenomena are one side of the life of a community: if we are discussing what the community should do, or forecasting what course it is likely to take, we must endeavour to view it as a whole, and dare not leave on one side the elements which are irrelevant to the study of particular problems and may be neglected in a narrow sphere. The method

of investigation which is best suited for the investigation of particular problems is admittedly one-sided: it consciously concentrates attention on the material interests, which are common to man everywhere as an animal; and it consciously disregards the differences of temperament which are found in different races, or the changes of sentiment which may be found in the same community in different ages. In order to deal with the life of a community as a whole, we must attempt so far as we can to take these matters into account, and to rely on experience of what has actually happened in the past, for guidance as to what it is expedient for us to do in the present day, and to aim at for the future.

The economic expert is right to isolate economic from other phenomena for the purpose of investigating special problems, but he is wrong if he thinks that this method can be applied directly to questions in regard to the economic life of the community as a whole. The expert, who insists on applying the method of Economic Science beyond the sphere where it is useful and necessary, is in danger of becoming an economic charlatan.

3. The habit of thinking of life as permanently split into sections is mistaken, and it has led to mischievous results. Since the time of Adam Smith, there has been a school who exaggerated one side of his teaching and insisted that it was almost criminal for the nation to interfere to regu-

late economic conditions. According to their principles, economic affairs lay outside the sphere of legislation altogether; they were confident that *laissez faire* would justify itself in the long run, and that there was no need to give conscious thought to the Common Weal since it was sure to take care of itself. But these principles have been generally abandoned: it is now recognised that there is no sphere of social activity that lies outside the Common Weal, or where it may not be advisable to bring the Common Weal to bear. It is the part of the economist, not to protest against all attempts to regulate industrial affairs, but to apply his knowledge so that legislation may discriminate, and really promote the Common Weal in the long run at a minimum of injury to private interests in the present.

4. This mistaken habit of thought is also responsible for serious misunderstanding in regard to international relations. Economic affairs are inextricably intermingled with political ambitions in national life. We cannot assume that any country is guided in its commercial agreements by economic considerations alone: there always has been and there still is an inclination to pursue economic success so as to use it as a foundation for political greatness. This was the basis of the Mercantile System which arose after the Age of Discovery. Each European country endeavoured to direct the development of her colonies, so as to build up the

power of the Mother Country, and to enable her to hold her own against or to dominate other European polities. That system broke down; one of the overseas dominions after another asserted its economic independence, and refused to be subordinated to the ambitions of a distant country. The most elementary right of any political community, which claims independence, is to develop its own economic life as it sees best and to guard against the sapping of the sources of that life by hostile neighbours.

The world at large has only gradually realised that this national economic independence is everywhere exposed to a subtle danger. The Hohenzollerns have cherished an ambition for world-empire; the Germans as a nation have never repudiated it, and have thrown their energies heartily into the means on which their rulers have relied for attaining their political aim; they have believed that political world-empire could be secured by means of industrial development, and the exploiting of the resources of other countries. There have been many who only saw in this the eager competition of the Germans for commercial greatness, and did not understand that the political ambition of the Kaiser could not be realised unless the independent political life of other countries was undermined. In an era when there is so much free intercourse, a country which is powerful economically can control the economic life of other countries and render them subservient to her own economic development; and thus use

them to minister to her political ambition. The Free Trade policy of the British Empire has given the Germans opportunity for pursuing their policy of peaceful penetration, and thus laying the economic foundations for Teutonic dominance. No serious effort has been made in the United Kingdom or in the Overseas Dominions to guard against this economic invasion, and we have been content to allow the Germans to determine the directions in which our activities should be expended. Our habit of regarding the economic sphere as quite distinct from the political has prevented us from recognising the political aims which have been kept in the background.

We can think of economic matters by themselves, but we cannot separate the economic and political into two spheres: we should try to remember how close and intimate are the relations in actual life. Economic means can be directed to secure political ends, and it is by economic means that political ambitions can be most effectively foiled. Lord Robert Cecil has insisted that the present war is maintained in Southern Europe and the East, "by Kaiserism, "by the military caste, backed by the classes who "get rich on war, the vultures of commerce and industry. The military caste we must convince by "arms, but the industrial and commercial vultures "we must attack in their pockets. We must show "them that war is not a paying business. Blockade "by itself will not do that. We must go farther and

“cut off their sources of wealth as far as we can. We
“must cut off their overseas branches in the Far
“East, in parts of South America, and elsewhere.
“We welcome the United States Trading with the
“Enemy Act, which is admirably designed to
“carry on economic pressure. People cannot carry
“on operations without financial assistance from
“outside. Without finance they lose credit, and
“without credit they are done¹.” The weapon on
which Lord Robert would rely in time of war should
not be wholly forgotten even in times of peace, for
it is the best means of enabling the national life to
develop freely.

¹ *Times*, 13th Oct. 1917, p. 6 a.

APPENDIX II

IDEALS FOR SOCIETY AND PERSONAL CHRISTIAN LIFE

I. The horrible suffering and widespread misery caused by the present war have immensely strengthened the feeling that such bloodshed is a disgrace to civilisation; and that the organisation of Society, in such a fashion that outbreaks of war shall be impossible and that we can count on perpetual peace throughout the world, is a prime necessity for the progress of mankind. This is an ideal which has been generally accepted by the Allies and in neutral countries as something to be aimed at¹ in the future; but there is some difference of opinion as to the steps which it is best to take in present circumstances, with the hope of moving towards the realisation of this ideal.

To the great majority of British subjects it appears that nothing can do more to discredit such

¹ The manner in which the Kaiser has stirred up discord and rebellion in distant parts of the world, and the preparations which are made for the next war, make it difficult to believe that the German people, so long as they acquiesce in such action, accept this ideal.

bloodshed, than to make it clear that war, even in its most highly organised form, does not pay, and that no country gains either politically or economically by having recourse to it. It seems a plain national duty to try to prevent a military tyranny from profiting by its crimes, and to resist the Germans by force of arms; so that they shall not secure domination, political and economic, over all the peoples of mankind, and thus be in a position to extinguish national liberties.

On the other hand there are Pacifists, who appear to believe that militarism will not be encouraged by success, and who urge that if we only give in and allow the Germans to attain the world-empire at which they have been aiming for so long, the inherent inability of evil to maintain itself permanently will be manifested; and that the liberties and progress of mankind will be better ensured than can ever be done by resisting the aggressors. There does not seem to be much reason, either in history or common sense, for anticipating that this result will follow; but Pacifists in Great Britain are none the less active in maintaining and diffusing their views. Some of them refuse to comply with the General Will of the democracy; and prefer to incur the stigma of being bad citizens; they seem anxious to enjoy all the advantages of life in a community, while at the same time they claim a right to act on their own judgment, and to defy the General Will.

2. There is however a small proportion of Pacifists who profess that their disregard of the duties of citizenship is based on religious grounds. They hold that the pacifist ideal of Society, for which they contend, is Christian and they claim to be really in earnest about following the Prince of Peace, and in desiring to promote the coming of His Kingdom. But this claim is hardly justified; for while Pacifism lays great stress on the hopes of Christianity for Society, it shows no appreciation of Christianity as a spiritual power in the lives of men personally.

There is a curious contrast between modern Pacifism, and the doctrine of Christ Himself, as set before us in the Gospels. He took the Mosaic injunction against killing, and interpreted it, not as a maxim condemning wars between nations, but as a personal warning against hatred and vindictiveness. He holds out hopes of a new Earth, which will be brought about by loyal acceptance of Him as Master; but His parables about the growth of that kingdom always represent its progress as gradual, and give no encouragement to the pacifist contention that this ideal for Society will prove so generally attractive as to realise itself in the world. It is not clear in the Gospels that our Lord ever laid down maxims for the government of the kingdoms of this world, or promulgated any regulations for secular societies; He set forth an example of personal life to those that received Him.

3. There are, however, many men who, while admitting that this is true of Christ Himself, would yet urge the acceptance of Pacifism as an interpretation of Christianity for our own day; they hold that it presents Christianity as denouncing the most apparent evil of our time; and, since it shows a common object towards which all may unite in directing their activities, it meets the needs of our generation. There are many men who are much impressed by the likeness between the aims of Pacifism and the Christian hope of a regenerated world; and they are inclined to regard this ideal for Society as a common ground, on which all bodies of Christians, at least, may be willing to take their stand together, in disregard of minor differences.

This anticipation of bringing about a union among Christians by promulgating an ideal for Society, is not however justified by past experience; in so far as religious men have aimed at creating a Christian Society, governed entirely on Christian principles, religion has been closely combined with politics and has been affected by divisions of political opinion. In the great religious movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the causes of cleavage and of permanent organisation in separate bodies were mainly connected with ideals for Society, rather than with efforts after the pursuit of personal religion; this is true of Presbyterians, as well as of Independents, Anabaptists and the

Society of Friends¹. In the present day the effort to found a pacifist organisation for the whole world would give rise to many political objections. It is not likely to furnish rallying-ground for all who call themselves Christians; indeed it has the characteristics of a dividing force. Although it is not distinctively Christian, since it has not the direct authority of Christ himself, and has close affinity with the teaching of Buddha, its adherents insist that it is the only true Christianity; and they are ready to condemn all Christian men of past ages as untrue to their principles, because they did not hold it. This is not the spirit which is most likely to promote the re-union of Christians in the present day.

4. This humanitarian ideal for Society and the world, even though it be expressed in Christian phraseology, can never satisfy those who are mainly concerned about fostering personal religion in themselves and in others. Humanitarians accept part of Christ's teaching and use it to bolster up their systems; but they miss the stimulus which comes from taking Christ as their Master, and from finding a constant inspiration in His life. His disciples believe that Christ has opened up a way by which men may enter personally into communion with God and share His thoughts, so as to consciously guide themselves by His Will; His disciples feel that it should be the aim of every human

¹ Cunningham, *Christianity and Politics*, pp. 4, 5.

being to strive more and more after realising this privilege and advancing in the knowledge of God and in personal likeness to Him. That human beings, with all their limitations, can never attain this character completely, is true enough; but it is also true that Christ holds out to us the method and the power of making constant progress towards entrance into this fuller life. He has not laid down any definite formula of belief or rules of conduct; but He has set forth in His own person a Life that stimulates man to a continual progress towards the Divine. He calls on His people to use every opportunity to realise that Life,—by abiding in Him to discard what is alien to Him and what He would reject; and to be actively concerned in doing themselves what He would do so as to have Him abiding in them. This personal religion was manifested anew as a spiritual force in the days of Wesley, and it has shown its present power in the appreciation of the leadership of Christ which has been seen in the Student Christian Movement.

It would be a disaster if the influence of this personal religion should be diverted from its work of gradually regenerating mankind, by insistence on visionary ideals for Society. The religious ideals for Society which denounce war as an evil in itself¹, and aim at the realisation of universal brotherhood, are never likely to be universally accepted or to be a

¹ Compare my "Memorandum on the Attitude of the Church towards War" in *Christianity and Politics*, p. 249.

basis for union, because the methods on which they rely are not really Christian. They aim at introducing better opportunities for the masses, and at producing a better feeling among men, by improving external conditions; whereas Christianity is spiritual, and holds that permanent regeneration can only be from within outwards, and that "life develops from within." Those who cherish a religious ideal for Society have a code which they would fain compel men to adopt; while Christianity appeals to the individual to rule himself by the perfect law of liberty. Religious philanthropy does not necessarily look beyond secular well-being, while Christianity seeks first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and regards all other things as subordinate and incidental.

The possibility of out-living the rivalry of different religious denominations does not depend on occasional drawing together, but on the deepening of the personal life,—the recognition by each individual that he has not attained neither is already perfect, but that there are depths and heights in the Christian life in which he has not personally shared, and which he may set himself to make his own. In the personal life of our Lord there are many different elements, and much apparent paradox: He fulfilled all righteousness and yet He was critical about the meticulous observance of pious ordinances. It is for each of His followers to aim at cultivating the Christian life as a whole, and not

merely to pay exclusive attention to any one particular doctrine or practice, however important he may feel it to be. Different men will always be apt to fix on one truth or another which appeals to their temperaments, and to insist that it is the essence of Christianity, as men insist on Pacifism to-day. Until we are each trying to appreciate the whole body of Christian belief and conduct, as it is manifested in the life of Christ personally with all its apparent paradoxes, we cannot hope to keep in complete sympathy with our fellow-Christians and to be in conscious communion with them.

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